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SIR RALPH ESHER:

OR,

ADVENTURES

OF

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT OF

CHARLES II.

[By Leigh Hunt]

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

OF

THE AUTHOR.

TO MADAME THE COUNTESS D'OLONNE, MADAME
DE LA PEYRONNIE, MONSIEUR AND MADAME
D'AUBESPINE, MADAME DE CARYL, AND CHARLES
CARYL, ESQUIRE, AT ST GERMAINS EN LAYE.

Hethering Bower, June 10th, 1685.

So the Count* is to tell you all about us, and the Colonel† is to put it upon paper for the benefit of posterity. The prospect is a little startling; but then I am to be beforehand with him, you say, and let the world know how much they are to believe. You remind me of an Irish acquaintance of mine, who, when that silly fellow Wiltshire (do you remember him?) was about to tell one of

* The Count de Grammont.

† Count Antony Hamilton.

his long stories, tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Before your Lordship begins, I have one observation to make : remember, I was there."

Grammont, to be sure, is no silly fellow. He has a great deal of wit. But his honesty, as you say, is not on a par with it. Your account of the late gambling affair, and the penitential psalm he wrote after it, made us laugh heartily. His telling his confessor, that he should have to write another, if he returned the money, was just like him.— Well: I will write the Memoirs you speak of; first, because the ladies desire it; secondly, because what you say about the two or three hours of a morning, is tempting to my necessity for some idle occupation; and thirdly, because my Lady Esher, though she knows a great deal already about those wicked times, is willing to know more. It is astonishing what an ardour for knowledge there is in women; and how proportioned it is (I must do them that justice) to their virtues. Here is my lady, daughter of the noble and grave Jesuit, and as grave as her father (to see her at breakfast), who will take her walk in the park, as if

nothing had happened, just after hearing one of the liveliest chapters in Stuart history. I tell her that I am afraid I have been too merry for her : but she says I am grave enough, when I go to court ; and that I have a very good public face. What do you think of that ?

It happens, fortunately, (the author's vanity, you see, is already upon me) that I have a journal among my papers, of two or three years of the period you speak of. It is very carelessly written, and with great interruptions. The wine that sometimes inspired me, at other times put me out. But so far this is lucky. It will give me an opportunity of writing it over again, of filling up gaps, and perhaps making a few wiser reflections. I shall also write it in French, for the advantage of the ladies ; and Gravity says, that she shall make a copy of it, that it may have two securities for its appearance, in case the Colonel is saucy.*

I am afraid she is too much in the right ; for to

* It is from this MS. copy, that the present work is translated.

tell you the truth, I am not sure that there will be any ground for disbelieving whatever the Count chuses to say of us, unless a person of some reputation for credibility shall think fit to contradict him. His own word is as good as that of most of the others in his day; and the Colonel will probably correct it as he goes. For my part, I should be loth to tell the world at large, how little I care what they thought of me; but I have friends; and there are circumstances in my life, which I should not chuse to see adorned by the exuberance of Monsieur de Grammont. Sober people would not know what to think of them in his relation. Perhaps they would, in mine.

You ask me if I remember him. Could I ever forget him? I think I see him coming into the room now, as jaunty and brisk as if he had not been up till five in the morning,—his object, to propose giving me “my revenge” the night following; that is to say, to increase my vindictive feelings by winning some more money. But he was pretty secure of me on that point. I did not care for cards, and

preserved my temper by not losing too much. The Chevalier (for so he was called then) professed to be tender of me, because I was so careless a player; so we used to talk as much as gamble, and he would relate the stories of his victories over a thousand poor devils with a perpetual shrug of the shoulders. Did you ever notice, that there was an absolute shrug of the shoulders in his face? When he stood in a circle, relating one of his humorous adventures, the laugh was not always quite so entirely with him as his wit might have looked for. Perhaps there was something of an instinct of this in his shrug; something of a ready-made indifference, in case of accidents. We thought him more French than a Frenchman; and so did the ladies. They had great difficulty in persuading themselves that he was in earnest; which was a mighty chagrin to him.

This is the secret of what you tell me about Jermyn. The Chevalier did not understand him. He could not conceive how a man, no taller nor better-made than himself, not so well-dressed, nor

half so lively, could succeed where he failed, and acquire the title of Invincible. The reason was, that Jermyn was capable of gravity, and had a certain faith; which he contrived to impart to others. As to Herne, it was still worse. You may be assured the Count will not venture to say anything about him. But I shall say a great deal; and I suspect that it will be, as it ought, the best part of my book. What think you? I have a journal of his too; and I have his and the Countess's permission to relate to your circle, exclusively and "with closed doors," all that I chuse to say about them; so that your curiosity will at length be gratified. He smiles, and says you will not think so well of him, as I fancy; but I will take my chance for that. They and their children are all well. Between you and me, the Countess is as much in love with him at this moment, as if they were to be married tomorrow.

Hamilton somehow I did not like. There was a slyness in his eyes, a hardness in the rest of his face, and a dullness in his conversation, till he got

heated with wine, upon which he would bring out a singular store of wit and fancy. You never felt sure of him. I used to wonder he did not turn Jesuit, and would not be certain of it now. However, he is just the man to be the Count's historian. He will exquisitely tune his exuberances. I do not pretend to his wit; and may be wrong in speaking of his conversational dullness, which I am afraid is becoming my own case till after dinner; on which account, suppose, Fortune has just led me to thin some vilink I am using, with a glass of claret. I hope you will feel the benefits of it.

By the way, when I speak of *you*, I reckon upon a certain dissemination. If beauty is alluded to, Mr Caryl, I presume, though a good-looking man, will not takt to himself. The wild scenes are intended for h and M. d'Aubespine, though the ladies, I suppose, in their ardour for knowledge, will read em. I take this opportunity of sending you correct account of the famous story of the Blue. It was Lady Arlington that told the King ot, and not Mrs Jones. The

King made her Ladyship repeat it before all the court. "Sir," said the Courtess, "your Majesty must know, that Mrs Caryl is, and always has been, and I suppose always will be (since she has got a habit of it) very fond of her husband: which must be excused, because twenty years ago he gave up his prospects in England to marry her. Furthermore, he has lived in France ever since; and he is a man of great wit and good nature. A little after Mrs Caryl had ceased to be Mademoiselle d'Aubespine, there was a conversation at the Marquis de Châteauneuf's, which turned upon favourite words, and produced a great deal of merriment. The ladies and gentlemen were to declare what were the most agreeable words they ever heard. So much noise was made, and there were so many complaints of fine things being said instead of true ones, that when it came to Mademoiselle d'Aubespine's turn to speak, I mean, Madame de Caryl,—a dead silence took place. Your Majesty understands that Madame de Caryl was looked upon as very sincere. The quaters of

romance hoped to be warranted in their flowery speeches, and the lively were prepared to catch her sincerity at fault. Sir, nothing could be prettier than the way in which she disappointed them; and it was all the better, inasmuch as it came by degrees. First, she blushed like an angel; at which there was a great cry. Then she said, the words were English, which made the cry greater, and the blush sweeter. M. d'Olonne declared afterwards that he had never seen so lovely a blush in his life; and instead of saying *couleur de rose*, he used thenceforward to speak of nothing but *couleur de Caryl*. "I wonder," said Madame de Caryl, with a sudden hastening of her words, as if to put an end to an embarrassment which she nevertheless bore very charmingly, "I wonder that anybody who has been beloved, can hesitate what to say, if they must say it. The most delightful words I ever heard were those which first said to me in English, 'I love you.'" Her voice could not help trembling as she uttered this confession; and but for the dead silence, I believe the last words had been scarcely audible. Mr Caryl bowed and kissed

her hand with a tenderness full of gratitude ; and three parts of the room, if not four, certainly envied them both." Here ended my Lady Arlington. The King was so pleased, that he told the story of "Caryl's Blush" twice over the same evening ; and next day, at the proposition of the Duke of York, who would not omit an opportunity of doing honour to one of his favourite names, all the ladies appeared in *venez-à-moys* of Caryl-coloured ribbon.

Think of this at the English court, and in honour of a sincere speech made twenty years ago ! The effect must have been odd to the spectators, knowing what they do : but this was not all ; for his Majesty sending some of the knots to Mrs Gwynn, she chose to read them as a letter ; and accepting the invitation, went to see him in his room where he was sick, and where she narrowly escaped meeting the Duchess.* The King was frightened out of his wits, but very kind, and they say loves her as well as ever. Nelly said she could not

* The Duchess of Portsmouth.

resist the breast-knot, and the sickness, and all. So now, madam, I hope your laurels are complete. The King told this story of Nelly, with tears in his eyes, to Godolphin, from whom I had it. When we think what happened only a few days after, and that *couleur de Caryl* was followed by court-mourning for his death, I hope you will think he was in a sincerer humour than in the greater part of his history.

Apropos of histories, and of speaking one's mind. I must tell you a diverting circumstance of an extraordinary woman, wife to an honest country gentleman, who is taking her to France for the benefit of her health. It is lucky for our polite neighbours, that she does not speak French. She is, or pretends to be, mad; and says, out loud, just what she thinks of everybody that comes near her. The first week of her arrival, everybody went to see if it was true: the second, not a soul ventured. The best of it is, she is as civil in half of her speeches, as she is shocking in the rest. If the joke is designed, it is an excellent one. Her manner is this:—an old acquaint-

ance comes in, to welcome her to town:—"Ah, Mr Smith, or Mr Johnson, I am very glad to see you."

"I called, madam, to say how glad we are to see *you*, and how sorry to find that we are so soon to lose you."

"Now that is so kind, Mr Johnson:—(*Out loud, and not aside*) a canting old fool!—And how is your son, worthy Mr Richard?"

"He is very well, I thank you, madam; and reckoned, I assure you, of very promising parts."

"Oh, I remember my little friend Richard well—(*out loud*) just such another fool as his father."

"Well, madam, I am sorry I must make a short visit, but I have an urgent affair to attend to. I thought to have found the reports of your ill health untrue; but you do not look well, I must own; your face is somewhat altered. I hope the air of France will restore you."

"I have great hopes of it, Mr Johnson, and I thank you heartily. I shall get rid of your stingy face, for one; and if the French are as tiresome, thank God I shall not understand them."

A whole party come in. "Hey-day! What now! Who are all these? Ah, Mr Chaloner, you are welcome. In the name of God, who has the man brought with him? How is your wife, pray, and young Mrs Chaloner, and all the little dears?—a pack of ill-mannered brats, whose faces I could thump with pleasure. Ah, Mistress Mary is behind you. How d'ye do, Mary, my dear?—Will she never leave off that frightful grin? And old Joseph, too! There he is. How d'ye do, Mr Griffin?—Griffin by name, and Griffin by nature; the man has a beak like an old jug. Now what am I to give all these people to eat? There's not a crumb in the house."

Pray tell this story to Croiset. He will not be afraid, next time, of being struck dumb by Madame de Thiangès. D'Aubespine will give it new graces in the telling; He will swear that the English woman is already at Paris; that La G——, and the little Count, and d'Armentières, and a hundred others, have been to see her; and he will pretend she spoke French, and that the Siamese grew angry, and then there will be a scene. I see you

all fainting with laughter in the little saloon, and Alliot coming in to see what is the matter.

To return to my history. Do you know, that I feel authorship coming fast upon me, owing to your instigations; that not knowing where to begin, I shall begin with the beginning, when I was a youth, and that I feel much inclined to tell you everything about myself, and about everybody else? Since I was last in France, or rather since you all paid me a visit in England, I have never had such an inclination to talk. You have often been pleased to wonder that I did not write more. The truth is, I have written more than you guess, my journal among other things, besides verses and a play: and half a good tome of a romance, the hero of which was one Julius Cæsar: but my admiration of the wit of others hindered me from publishing my own essays. I threw off a song now and then, well enough, and was critical of the songs of others; but I was not content without doing better; and when I came to try that, I found myself too much of an imitator. My short verses were like Butler's, and my long like Mr

Dryden's; I mean for the sound. Had the true passion of love been in any request, I really think I might have done something; for I never ceased to worship that in private (week-days excepted) and, as it were, in the Sundays of my heart. I contrived sometimes to bow to the saint, even in the person of the sinner; and ever since Miss Waring forgave me, you know I have openly professed the true religion. In short, I will not swear, that in making an historian of me, you have not spoilt a restorer of the times of Thyrsis and Saccharissa; always understanding, that my mistress should have had a better name, if not better verses; and that I was not only in earnest while I was worshipping (which I fear was Mr Waller's case), but while I was loving too.

Twenty years ago, if I had undertaken to write these memorials, I should have made a grand romance of them. King Charles would have been Almanzor, or Mithridates, or the King of the Pearl Islands; Colonel Blood might have been Sanguinor of the Ivory Vizard; my Lady Portsmouth, Lucretia; the wits, the Decemviri;

Clarendon, Vitellius, father of the aspiring Oroncia; and Mrs Gwynn, the Lowborn Exalted, who, laughing withal like a Venus in green sleeves, led about a ram with a crown on his head. As it is, I shall have no reserves, no mysteries to find out, nor an allegory with gilt horns. My history shall not even be an amorous history of the Ancient Britons; whose manner would very ill suit us, sitting out of doors on their muddy banks, and painting their knee-pans. It is difficult to fancy a mistress, with a horrid face painted upon either *patella*: otherwise, our ancestors had some things in common with us, not very usual, if my brother-historians are to be trusted. Neither shall I follow M. de Bussy, nor the threatened history of the Count de Grammont, in venting piques against my friends, and making their good and ill qualities alike fictitious. I shall be as conscientious as Signor Gregorio;* with a little more truth in me, by way of proving it.

Heavens! what a mighty and a madcap world

* Gregorio Leti, who was in England in this reign.—*Edit.*

have you not thrown open for me to live over again! What a glitter of courts! what a pulling off of plumed hats! what a rustling of silks! what a sparkling of eyes! Then what an abundance of rascals; and what an overflow of wine and of wit! (would that I could send you half of either the one or the other, for then it would not have been wasted.) I have goodness, too, to tell you of; yea, even innocence, and some love; and the rascals, as my Lord Dorset says, were not quite so bad "as they flattered themselves." Mr Harper, who was present when he said this, excepted Rochester and Lady Shrewsbury. "No," said he, "not if you knew all! What a father had Rochester, and how young he came to court! I remember him when he first arrived, blushing at every word he spoke. To be sure that was no very good symptom. But there was some good in him: he was *comis in uxorem*. As to the Countess, I know not altogether what to say for her; but, depend upon it, there was something—" And then he made a pretty quotation, which I have forgotten, from one Shakspeare, of whom you know nothing in France;

though some of us are impudent enough, on this side of the water, to prefer him to the great poet whom you have lost. "But Blood!" returned Harper, "what does your Lordship say to *him*?" "Oh!" cried he, "the tyger! He had a smooth skin: I would have had him fed well in a cage, and shewn about for a shilling." "And Titus, the Delight of Mankind?"* "A mere monster," said the Earl: "why he had a chin three times the length of any other man's: do you think that portended nothing?" But you know the humour of this excellent lord, my old friend and patron, and the delight of all who come near him. He is for venting the whole spleen of the globe in words, with an occasional thrust or two in the ribs, if people insist upon it. He would not have even Titus hung. I confess I like to hear him talk on this point, as indeed he talks admirably on all. I have seen things in the world which have often forced a turn of my thoughts the same way; especially when I had any such hand in them myself

* Titus Oates.

as needed excuse; for with a little reflection, the consciousness of error makes men as charitable, as it makes fools hardened and malignant. Here is a pretty turn for you in favour of one's vices, and a fine road to charity! Yet with all these impartial reflections, I found myself the next moment hating shabbiness, and stinginess, and fifty other ungentle vices, as much as ever; and I could have run the Colonel through the body with the greatest pleasure in life. But my lord says there is an involuntary philosophy in my good nature; and that when I am telling stories of old times, I see fairer play than I imagine to all parties; which is a comfort to me, considering that I am to be an historian, and that I hate half a dozen people I could name, worse than mulled port. If it will be better for some, it will be worse for others; for there are some people, who have a trick of getting the fair play all on their own side; and therefore I delight to hear that I shall do them justice.

M. de St Evremond, who was present at this conversation with Mr Harper, complimented my lord on the delicacy of the judgment he had deli-

vered. He said it would make a fine essay. He begs his compliments to Madame d'Olonne, and says that the new proof of his candour, which has been growing upon his face these two years, (his wen,) does not give him any trouble at present, though he shall certainly cut it out, and cast it from him, if the shew of his imperfections become burdensome. He thinks it may even contribute to his health, by a harmless concentration of bad humours; which opinion he is the more confirmed in, by finding it most affected after hearing a bad poem; or when he is obliged to live a whole day without kissing the tip of the ear of Madame de Mazarin. M. de St Evremond is in excellent health, and as cheerful as ever, though at present he must needs be a little anxious during the interregnum of his pension.

What I am afraid of sometimes, when I think of these Memoirs, is, that I shall cut an ill figure in them myself. Do not be astonished over much. I have known Ralph Esher now (more shame for him) these forty years; and, in spite of his defects, I cannot help having a regard for him. But I

must take care, if I can, how I express it; for I have noticed that people make great mistakes that way, and never shew their faults so much as when they think to conceal them. Nay, I fear that they must come out in spite of all attempts to the contrary; for even a carefulness on this head is a sort of disingenuity. So I must take my chance. The other day, when I was in town, I met his Grace the Duke of Buckingham,* Lord Commissioner, who is in high favour with his Majesty and Mr Secretary, for going to mass. Jack swears he is as good a catholic as any of the Caryls, which I did not dispute. In asking after the health of Jack's cousin, it came out that I had been requested to write *Memoirs*, a design (you know his grand way) in which he was pleased to express his princely concurrence; adding, with a smile, that as I avoided the more heroical passages of history, or meant to devote myself chiefly to the recording of trifles and privacies, I might not be unwilling to see a little thing which he had begun, in a fit of idleness, on

* Sheffield. James the Second had just come to the throne, and appointed him to the office here mentioned.—*Edit.*

something of a like subject. The next day he sent to my house a packet, which contained a regular commencement of his history, the whole consisting of divers of his calm and courageous behaviours in battle, not forgetting his encounter with Lord Rochester. To compare great things with small, my egregious neighbour, Mr Lilly (tell the ladies who he was,) was once mightily bent on having me for one of his Mecænases and most worthy knights; and accordingly begged permission to send me a manuscript to entice me withal, which he had written for the instruction and glory of "the most noble esquire Ashmole." I had met him in the county hall, where he came cringing up and craving my noble countenance; his whole aspect, hair, eyes, lips, and shoulders, falling down and absolutely flowing with meanness. His manuscript turned out to be like his appearance. It was no less than a life of the impudent varlet,—making himself out to be one of the greatest mixtures of fool and knave that ever existed. Yet, even this, I am told, is nothing to a curiosity in possession of Lord Herbert. It is the life of his grandfather,

the first lord, author of the famous book, "De Veritate." He was the first avowed Deist, and an enemy of all superstition and miracles; and therefore what does he do, but kneel down with his deistical book in his hand, and humbly request of God to give him a sign that there are no such things as miracles. The sign was given him, in the shape of a clap of thunder: and from that day forth his lordship was secure that there never had been a Revelation vouchsafed to mankind, except in that particular instance.

After such an exhibition as this, a man who is going to write an account of himself, should set to it as gallantly as if he were at a drinking party. He should make up his mind, that if the wine is to be drunk, the truth will come out. What a pity that everybody has not written a life, especially in this latter generation,—Barillon, Nelly, and all! Oliver should have given us his commentaries, and Lord Shaftsbury his sweet experiences. Jacob Hall should have written too, if he could; and Kynaston,—who used to ride with the ladies in their coaches after the play, in his female dress.

What a time we should have of it ! Memoir-reading would be a part of the business of life. No matter how many lies. We should sit merrily, like a certain judge on the bench, and fetch the truth out of conflicting evidence, especially if calculated to hang the party ; for in that quarter it would be greatest. One's memoirs ought to be a matter of course, like dressing, or making one's will. Solomon ought to have written them ; the Greeks and Romans ; all the French, Italians, and Spanish ; and the Muscovites and Siamese. When the Grand Duke was in England, his secretary Count Magalotti told me, that there was a manuscript life of the old Florentine sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini, which they would not suffer to be published on account of the free pictures it draws of the Pope and the Cardinals. The man was a madman, but very clever. I think you have seen one of the cups for which he was so famous, at Fontainebleau. The Duchess of Portsmouth has another ; the sight of which, I remember, one day, suggested to our good King the supporters of a coat of arms for one of his little dukes. Well : Cellini tells all,—cups,

quarrels, assassinations, and benedictions; and takes himself for a very ill-used gentleman, a little hot or so, a little given to murder, but nothing to signify; and the Pope said he was too good a genius to be hung. They could not spare him, he made such pretty cups, and only killed people of a doubtful value. This is better than Lilly. Why do not all people write so, and let us see the good opinion they have of themselves, anything to the contrary notwithstanding. There is something in it, I know not what, which strikes one as right and fitting (murder excepted); and makes me long more than ever for Memoirs—Memoirs—eternal Memoirs. They say that my Lord Clarendon, besides the book he was writing for the King, has bequeathed a life of himself to posterity, which you may depend upon it will not see the light, as long as there is a certain chance for *his* posterity. What we may equally depend upon, if we live to see it, is, that he will make no mention of the fat, and the good living, which was the death of him, and a reversion of which his daughters have secured for their benefit. But if

the booksellers put his portrait at the beginning, it will do as well.

I shall commence then forthwith, tomorrow morning, with all my sins and all my memories on my head, together with the velvet cap which Madame d'Aubespine made me, and which I keep for grand occasions. I had some thoughts of putting on my wig, that the sight of it over my shoulders might act as an airy inspirer, and remind me of the gallantries of my youth; but at that time, alas, my wig was my own hair; whereas, now, my hair is some other man's wig. Not that I could not have a crop sufficient for one still, if the mode permitted; but I doubt—Here my Lady Esher jogs me, and will not suffer me to write what I was going to say. She says it is not true. She can see, by the colour of my beard, that my hair would be a fine chesnut still. I say nothing, except that it is lucky beards are no longer worn. She differs with me here again; says that a beard must have been a fine thing, and that it is a great pleasure to her to think that I could have a glorious one if I chose. So I give

up. If I am tender about the figure I shall cut in this excellent history, I have no fear, I assure you, for others. I shall be quite impartial with them. My fingers long to be at them,—to handle my pen, as I have seen Sir Peter do his brush, with a relish in the anticipation; only I trust, that my inferiority in the execution will be made up by the greater truth of the likeness, my heroines having their eyes wide open enough sometimes, and being even decently dressed. Assuredly we cut an ill figure in our pictures, compared with those of the preceding age. Our mothers, in Vandyke's pictures, look like spirited young ladies, fresh as the morning, and about to issue into the morning air. In Sir Peter, I am afraid they look sometimes not very different from my lady's woman, sitting up for the butler.

But I must not calumniate my people beforehand. Neither must I be in too great a hurry. You remember seeing a play of Ben Jonson whom M. de St Evremond used to talk so much about. It would be very convenient, though not

very proper, to begin a history with a list of *dramatis personæ* in his style,—a characteristic nomenclature. (Apply this, by the way, to people whom you know, and see how trippingly the names come off.) There is a poor man here, a puritan, who wrote a strange, wild book, in which he turned it to account in a very singular manner. What think you of my Lord Old Man, the Lord Carnal Delight, the Lord Pride of the Eyes, and Mr Worldly Wiseman? Also of my Lady Painted Sepulchre, and the Chevalier Having-Greedy? * Could not a master of the ceremonies match these eminent persons in any court of Europe? I see abbés and dukes by the dozen, flowing out of your lips. I have a duke myself for the Lord Pride of the Eyes: and many a time have I played at cards with the Lord Old Man, who cared for nothing so long as he could see the spots. Take some of my leading persons, Mr Caryl, and see, from what you know of them, if you could not fill up the blanks

* *Sir Having-Greedy* is in Bunyan; but there is nobody answering to the title of *my Lady Tombeau-Fardé*.

opposite, with pretty shrewd guesses at nouns and adjectives. There is

King Charles the Second.

The Duchess of Cleveland.

The Duchess of Richmond.

The Duchess of York.

My Lady Esher.

The Countess de Vavasour.

The Earl of Clarendon.

The Duke of Buckingham (not the knight of the *shire*.)

The Duke himself.*

Sir George Hewitt.

Sir Philip Herne.

Miss Stewart.

Mrs Gwynn.

Mr Milton (an odd procession.)

Oliver Cromwell.

The Maids of Honour.

My Lord Waringstown.

Mr Marvell.†

Mr Butler.

Mr Dryden.†

Blood, the rascal.

M. de St Evremond.†

* The Duke of York.

† The promises here implied, which were acted upon in the MS., have come to nothing in the translation, for a reason mentioned in the Preface.

cum multis aliis; but with some of the best you are not acquainted, except a certain lady, who vows that this letter shall go in front of the manuscript, for a preface, in order that she may not be left out; the rogue; as if I did not think too much of her always. I need not repeat, that nobody but yourselves (and posterity) must read it,—a pretty reserve. Not to mention other reasons, I should be forced to have the honour of fighting with all Buckinghamshire,* which would be inconvenient at this juncture, and threaten the last hopes of an ancient family.

Adieu, till you have a packet. There is nothing new here, except that Mr Dryden has written a bad opera, and M. Grabut set it to worse music; which is a critique I hope you will acknowledge to be impartial, making allowance for national prejudices. I like to make it matter of astonishment, that an English wit can produce a dull performance, when we are so ready on this side the

* A sneer at Sheffield, who was forced against his will to have the title of Buckinghamshire, instead of the more famous and sprightly one of Buckingham, a claim existing to the latter in another family.—*Edit.*

water to acknowledge the merits of those who do not care to know anything about ourselves. Even M. de St Evremond, who has now been with us these dozen years, has not condescended to speak our language; though it must be allowed, that he both reads and commends us? Pray do you teach your friends to do likewise? Mr Marvell used to say, that a time would come; but that the wits were not the people to bring it about. Cowley was of opinion, that he alluded to my Lord Verulam. Others think, that he intended Mr Milton. If he did, I can only say, with all my respect for that surprising genius, whom your ambassador Lord Dorset pronounces to be equal to Virgil, that the world seem as far off, at present, from finding out his Paradise, as they are from agreeing upon the site of the other.—A thousand adieus.



MEMOIRS
OF
SIR RALPH ESHER.

CHAPTER I.

I AM the only son of an ancient family in the county of Surrey, who had lost everything of their importance but the name. All that we possessed, was a high reputation for honour, and just enough worldly substance to keep us in the rank of gentry. My ancestors had made themselves conspicuous by a zeal for the catholic faith, which did not tend to increase their fortunes. My grandfather became no less an enemy to himself, in the shape of a friend to the puritans: and he was succeeded in all his generosity by his son, my kind, stout-hearted father, whom I should never cease to love, had he left me nothing but a straw. He died, covered with wounds, in the Parliament service, when I

was just old enough to remember him. He had the decency, without the formality, of his sect (I forget which of the Independents it was); and he was pardoned the deficiency, for the sake of the attachment. I remember a scene, of my mother weeping, and his kissing me with a great helmet on his head which he took off, and which afterwards at college, when I came to read Homer, produced an odd confusion in my mind, respecting the Trojan leader, whom I could not help associating with ideas of the Covenant.

At college I remained but a year. A letter from my mother recalled me, partly on account of the straitness of the family purse, into which I had made some inroads, and chiefly by reason of the injunctions of pious Mr Saunders, an Independent minister who had become domesticated with us, and who was resolved I should make the inroads no longer. He was, however, a disinterested man, bent upon heaping nothing but self-denials on himself and all of us. I found him installed in the dignity of spiritual master of the house, my tender mother, who had never raised her head up since my father's death, waiting on every word he uttered, and determined to have as little of the few comforts that remained to her as possible. I believe I saved her life by my arrival; for she could not help taking a delight in my presence; and more-

over, Mr Saunders allowed her to think it innocent. Had I been older, I should have pitied them both, and struggled hard to remonstrate. As it was, I unconsciously gave way to their customs, chiefly because my father was understood to have been of the same way of thinking; which made me feel as if my own propensity to cheerfulness need be no hindrance to the general strictness of us all. But I was assisted by another reason which I shall mention presently.

I soon found that the wintry pleasure in his face, with which Mr Saunders received me, was owing, not merely to his natural kind-heartedness, but to a certain rescue which he had made of me from the jaws of the master of the college, who differed with him in a shade or two of opinion. The master had been strict enough, but he was nothing to mortified Master Saunders. Even the smiles which my mother bestowed upon me, were to be warranted by texts of scripture, lest they should degenerate into worldly comfort. We had prayers on getting up, (but always extempore:—there were to be no superstitious observances,) prayers before and after breakfast, prayers at dinner, and supper, and going to bed, prayers whenever a friend came in, and whenever any of us went out for a walk, or returned from it; because it is directed that we should be watchful

over our goings out, and our comings in. It was little that we had our shutters closed every Saturday, in order to prepare for the sabbath. That was common enough. The very ray of light that came in from the space left at top, would have been disapproved, had not Mr Saunders found a simile for it in scripture. This rendered it a light from heaven, and saved us from making each other's countenances more ghostly by candles at noon-day. Then there were expoundings, and seekings, and wrestlings innumerable, the wrestlings being all on the knees, which used to tickle me so, that I could have torn them to pieces. Nobody thought of the luxury of a hassock. I contrived, as often as I could, to get a table or some other piece of furniture between me and the chief wrestler, in order that I might scratch my knees at leisure. He detected me; and almost made me mad with vexation, by congratulating me on the opportunity I had to shew my contempt for that cross in the flesh. I was in the habit of receiving his notions with respect; I was brought up in the spirit of them, though not in this vexatious letter; and it was impossible not to see that he was a very good and kind man; but a few of these little inconveniences, together with the glimpses I had of jollier doings on the part of some respectable neighbours, went more to keep me in a state of

convertibility to the church, than all the mightier absurdities he uttered.

A circumstance however assisted to delay my falling off; which was lucky; as it would have gone nigh to kill my poor mother. Among the few visitors who came to see us (for the neighbourhood was inclined to be loyal, and Mr Saunders's opinions even among his own sect were peculiar) was a young lady, the child, like myself, of a deceased Parliamentary officer, and very dear on that account, as well as for the perfection of her religious faith, to my mother. This little saint used to come among others to wrestle with us, and as she was the first person of her sex and age I was ever so close to, I regretted that she wrestled at the other side of the room. We had been very strict at our college; but discourses on love, not always divine, crept in among us; and the sweet saints that the poets talk of, easily became confounded in our imaginations with those of another sort. I therefore fancied myself in love; and as youth is a great mimic, and love too, I took delight in imitating the greater gravity of my fair sister in the faith, hoping moreover that it would recommend me to her notice, and trying to persuade myself that the more solemn we both looked, the more we understood one another.

We had few books in the house. What there

were consisted chiefly of prose, and were all on divine subjects. The only poets in favour were Quarles and Wither. Mr Milton was in high repute as a controversialist; but his poetry was kept in the shade, for he had not then written the *Paradise Lost*, and there were symptoms of heathenism in his early poems,—unripe and unstaid thoughts, the vanities of youth. He mentioned cathedral windows, and eulogized the organ. Even a bishop was praised in his Latin pieces; and King James was sent to heaven by the Gunpowder Plot, instead of the way which all parties ought to have gone. This did not hinder me from recollecting some things I had seen in his book at college; such as the portrait of Melancholy, which I applied to Miss Newen,

“ Her rapt soul sitting in her eyes;”

to which I could not help adding occasionally that of Mirth, who was to come and trip it

“ On the light fantastic toe.”

A very fantastic toe it would have been in our house. Whether Miss Newen was to dance or walk, all my portraits of her presented a staid countenance. Nevertheless, some lively images out of *L'Allegro* would intrude, nothing the worse for the gravity. As for Wither, who had lately been Major-General of the county, I had a great respect

for him; and could not have conceived it possible that the vicissitudes of things would have affected his reputation, or ever brought about a time when I could laugh at his Muse. But I always associated the idea of his poetry with something sacred, even when he vented his spleen, or fancied himself facetious. Quarles impressed me still more with his pictured allegories. The man with the beam sticking out of his eye, raised no image in me of the ridiculous. I took it for one of the sacred marvels of his author. The little fellow screaming inside the skeleton—"Who shall deliver me from this body of death"—seemed to me in as natural though awful a state, as if he had been in an infernal prison. These, I thought, were the great poets; but I could not help preferring Mr Milton, who illegally talked of a

"Pensive nun, devout and pure."

Mr Saunders used often to speak with great indignation and abhorrence of the superstitious practices of a person, whom he called "poor deluded Mr Farrar of Little Gidding." Mr Farrar was a gentleman, who about thirty years before, had set up a kind of protestant convent, in which he and his kindred, to the amount of forty persons, led an evangelical life. They rose at four, went to prayers at five, sang psalms at six, psalms again and breakfast at seven; and so on throughout the

day, and the year. It is said, "At midnight, I will arise and give thanks:" therefore Mr Farrar got up at half-past twelve o'clock at night in the cold, and was thankful. It is written also, "I will cry out in the morning:" therefore Mr Farrar thought it right to be so vociferous when he awoke, that you would have supposed Mrs Farrar was being the death of him. So far, all was well. But what Mr Saunders could not tolerate, was, that all this was done upon system; and that the system was not his own. The crying out in the morning was not unpremeditated and unlooked-for. The rising in the night was Babylonish. The royal psalmist, in his enthusiasm as a poet and prophet, says, on one occasion, that he shall sing without ceasing. Mr Farrar took it into his head, that his family was bound to do likewise; so there was a constant round of psalmody going on, night and day, one part of the singers relieving the other, and four hours during the night being found sufficient to go through the whole Book of Psalms. Mr Saunders was the more angry with this, because he really admired the virtue of such perseverance; nor, can it be doubted, that had he been of kin to Mr Farrar, and flourishing at the same time, he would have been one of the most exemplary of the performers. But besides these and other monkeries, such as repeated bowings, more fit for a "shame-

less Archbishop" (meaning Laud) than a Christian, the profane people of Little Gidding had music; their chief himself "writhing and unboning his clergy-limbs" by playing on the viol; and to crown Mr Saunders's wrath, and my secret admiration, (for here lay the cause of it) Mr Farrar was "filthy" enough, as he expressed it, to have seven virgin nieces, who imitated the nuns or angels, and assumed epithets indicative of certain characters which they were to sustain. One was called "the patient," another "the affectionate," a third "the cheerful," &c. How much better, thought I, for every virgin niece to be all these characters in one, and for Mary Newen to be among them, and I there, accompanying the sweet saint on the *viol di gamba*. I did not dare to express such a notion to her. I found it necessary to look graver than before, so lively did the reflection make me. In a word, I contrived to be very grave, and to get nearer and nearer to her, till the poor girl died of a consumption, which everybody knew of but myself.

My feelings on that occasion were remarkable. I felt shocked, not so much at the event, as at not being more sorry for it; for I still fancied that I had loved. My delusion was a comfort to all parties. I thought it incumbent upon me, as a lover, to be very miserable; which, as I had never declared my passion, I could only exhibit in a mys-

terious manner, by a more than usual silence, and by not eating half so much as I wished. How often have I longed to finish the plate which I sent away untouched ! My mother thought I had been visited with the deepest and most innocent of first loves ; and by permission of Mr Saunders, she would put the nicest morsels before me, such as I would have given worlds to devour. Mr Saunders, kindly disposed always, never shewed it so much as then, for he concluded that the strength of his exhortations supported me, and that so early a calamity had made me serious for life. Poor man ! he little thought that hunger and a poetical notion were disputing the matter hard within me, and that the recollection of his face was to be a warning to me, for ever, against parting with my natural cheerfulness. It was a face, naturally benignant, which looked as if it had had three or four layers of peevishness brought upon it by the growth of time. There was a regret in it, that he had not been more comfortable ; then a sorrow for the regret ; and then a sorrow for the sorrow, as if unworthy of the minister who was bound to endure all things with cheerfulness.

I went on in this way for nearly two years, looking very grave, occasionally sporting in the neighbourhood with serious huntsmen, and nursing a propensity to the acquaintance of the gay

and the witty. My mother screened me, when I played truant. I had heard at college of the Denhams and the Cowleys. They were forbidden names in our house, and this made me like them the more. I thought their loyalty a sin; but it began to look rather a pleasing one, like the gallantries of which they spoke; and from pitying them, I warmed into admiration. I rode one day on purpose to see Cooper's Hill, because Mr Denham had written a poem upon it; and hearing that Cowley was coming to see Mr Evelyn at Wootton, I went there and waited all the morning, till I saw him arrive. He had a book in his hand, with his finger between the leaves, as if he had been reading. He was a fleshy, heavy man, not looking in good health, and had something of a stare in his eye. Before he entered the gate, he stooped down to pinch the cheeks of some little children at play; and afterwards, when I heard he was put in prison, I could not, for the life of me, persuade myself that he deserved it.

At the end of this period, pious Mr Saunders died, confidently expecting the bliss which he deserved, yet not able to get rid of the sorrowful expression of his countenance. I hope that a circumstance which occurred a little before, and which gave me a new life, did not help to kill him. I do not mean the Restoration, which hap-

pened just then, but the arrival of a little princess of mirth, described as a distant relation of ours, and daughter of a presbyterian, who came as the harbinger of her father to make peace for his long absence, and smooth the way to a plan he had in view. I fancied her my second love. She was as different from the last, as mirth from melancholy. As long as she was in the presence of her elders, she kept a grave face, her eyes nevertheless, which were small and long, peering sideways as if she could have taken a sudden run like a kid, and butted Mr Saunders's legs. Next morning, the elders being as usual at the farther part of the house, she contrived to slip from the old house-keeper, and meeting me in the garden, said to me in a hurried manner, "Are you always so?"—"Always how?"—"Why, always stuck up like ghosts? and do you never speak above a whisper, except when you are praying? Can they overhear us?"—"Who?"—"Why, your mother and Mr Saunders."—"No," said I, laughing, "they are on the other side of a dozen walls."—"Oh, and you can laugh, can you?" says she; "then look here." With these words, she ran with all her might to the other end of the garden, and cried out, "Ho! ho! Hallo!" Then taking a turn, she scampered up the bowling green, and shouted again with all her force. I found this so diverting, that I ran

after her, and leaping on the bench too, shouted three times as loud; at which she laughed ready to die; and then we both laughed for good company, and from that moment were excellent friends.

We ran into every part of the garden, laughing and talking; but what was my horror, in turning an alley, to see Mr Saunders and my mother coming towards us, with anxiety in their looks. My mother seemed faint, but said, "Oh, 'tis only the children."—"Only the children, madam!" exclaimed Mr Saunders indignantly, "and alarming tender and christian people with this profane outcry! Mr Esher ought surely to be no longer a child."

You may rest easy, thought I, for that matter. I turned to my companion, to re-assure her by my looks; but she was as staid as a judge. The disturbance passed over; but the good minister who began to decline, would pay himself for his patient endurance of sickness, by giving me divers quips about disappointments and evils to come, which made my poor mother shed tears. At other times he was very kind and hopeful, and gave me long injunctions, which he wished to consider as ample securities against evil, though his face and voice were full of trouble when he said it. He was a very different sort of person from the robust soldiers and Parliament's men, of whom I retained a

recollection from childhood, and some of whom I saw still treading the land like its conquerors, growling at the light multitude that out-voted them. Had I been under a stouter hand than his, I might have been soured and made wilder than I became. As it was, I retained a kind memory of him, and a very tender one of my mother, who died not long afterwards. Her death was happy, for she was inclined to believe whatever was told her: and though the guardian into whose hands I passed for the remainder of my nonage, was a presbyterian, being the distant relation above mentioned, yet he spoke in a strain so well calculated to keep their differences of opinion in the shade, and to paint bright days both for me and the true church, that she went smiling to the land of good mothers. I was to go and live with him in a short time. Meanwhile I remained at the house of a common friend in the neighbourhood, who, under the guise of austerity, was nothing but a trimmer, waiting his opportunities. He let me do as I liked, now that the King was come back; and in company with his daughter and my lively cousin, I passed a season so full of gaiety, that I sometimes reproached myself for not taking the loss of my mother more deeply to heart.

CHAPTER II.

If the period of life were to be named, at which, with one exception, a man is likely to be happiest, supposing his circumstances to be otherwise not unfavourable, I should think it must be the latter part of his nonage—from fifteen to twenty. He is full of health and hope; has nothing to regret; everything to look forward to; and if, in addition to all this, you give him a love for books, a love for manly sports, and a love, or what he conceives to be such, to be in love with, he has only to wish what he never thinks of wishing—namely, that he could be so for ever. I was in this state at Epsom, in the summer of the year 1662. It was beautiful weather. My cousin (for so I delighted to call her, though I could not even then discover the relationship,) was to leave us in July; but we were to swear eternal affection, and meanwhile the affection was eternally going on. I read what books I pleased,

and became intimate with the works of Sir John Suckling, Carew, Waller, and twenty other gallants, in whose pages I found my mistress and myself at every turn. I rode, I hunted, I strolled the woods, I longed to dance sarabands to the tune of—

“Hylas, Hylas, why sit we mute?”

and I played at bowls with Sir John’s verses in my head, and my cousin’s little winking eyes looking upon me.*

Not that I thought bowls at all equal to wit (whatever airs I gave myself in the quotation), or cared for hunting, or for anything else, if I could have paid undivided attention to Miss Warmestre. I hunted when I could not see her; I laughed because she did; and the greatest pleasure I found in my books (which were the only things that pretended to occupy a thought besides,) was in twisting her into every possible heroine, shape, and posture, that were to be met with in the bowers of poetry. She was Chloris, and Doris, and Saccharissa, and Venus:—Venus, from that day, being a buxom little girl, with a nose inclining to the turned-up, and half-shut eyes. So, thought I, the

* “And priz’d black eyes, or a lucky hit
At bowls, above all the trophies of wit.”

lass of the 'Wedding' looked, when she was going to be married:—

“ Her lips were red, and one was thin,
Compar'd to that was next her chin,
Some bee had stung it newly.”

Such was the ribbon round the waist which made the poet very properly cry out, when he got possession of it, and held it waving in the air,—

“ Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.”

The little rogue knew her power, and took the passion in the merriest manner in the world: that is to say, as far as she was capable of it; which was about as much, at that time, as was afterwards in vogue. I was more serious; but nothing could hinder her from laughing and playing the romp. Sometimes, when I was saying tender things, full of gravity, she would put on my hat, and go making a thousand antics over the green, for me to catch her. Another time she would dip her head into a great tub of water, and come shaking the curls in my face. Unfortunately, she was not unwilling to make me jealous. I was scrupulous on that point, and hence we came to have some quarrels. However, we parted in July on the best terms, with exchanges of locks of hair, only she

was eating a great piece of cake all the while: for which I could have beaten her.

The King was expected at that time on a visit to Lord Berkeley, at Durdans. Miss Warmestre regretted that she could not stay to see him; however, she begged her compliments to the cavaliers, and I was to say she meant soon to be presented. I little thought how soon that was to be, and how we were to laugh together at the recollection. I was dull for a few days; but somehow I did not feel the same impossibility, as I did with Miss Newen, in applying the same passages of books to other girls. I found afterwards, that I was not in love with either; but the gravity of my fancy for Miss Newen associated with itself a stronger sentiment of devotedness. Miss Warmestre, when away, began to be twenty other girls. One had her air; another her walk; another even better eyes, though perhaps not such a mouth. A token of recollection, which she had promised me in the course of a week, did not arrive; nor the next, nor the next. I began to be angry, and to look with fresh impatience for the arrival of the King and his court.

The talk of this advent occupied the whole neighbourhood for twenty miles round. Nothing was to be heard but "when is he coming?" and "who will come with him?" for a main part of the curiosity consisted in making enquiries upon the

latter point. As the dwellers in Epsom paced, of an evening, that pleasing town, you caught the words, "If the Earl of Castlemain should take it in his head"—and then, from the next comers, "But you do not imagine that my Lord Berkeley"—

The King was expected some days before his arrival, by those who were not in the secret. Every horseman was watched as he came through the town, under the notion that he brought some intelligence; and no coach could be heard, but everybody ran to the door. The commonest traveller seemed to partake of the dignity of those who were expected, and carried a look of meaning in his face. At length the tradesmen announced for certain, that his Majesty was coming on the first of September. It wanted four days of that epoch. The men were all bustle in the morning, and drinking in the evening, to pass away the time. The women were delighted with the certainty, and ready to tear their hair at the delay. As for me, I went strolling about the woods, to complain to the deities of Miss Warmestre, and I read some pieces of my favourite poets; with which I stuffed my pockets.

I found several things in Mr Cowley's 'Mistress' to apply to my case. Now I froze—and now I burned,—accordingly as the poet was affected; and then I determined on writing some verses to Despair; justly concluding, that if so great a man

as Mr Cowley could not move a woman to love him with all his learning, no hope remained for a beginner. The conclusion of Sir John Suckling's poem startled me :

“Quit, quit, for shame ; this will not move ;
If heav'n forsake her,
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing will make her :—
The Devil take her.”

I was still too much in love, and too little acquainted with the new style of gallantry, to vent so cavalier an impatience. But the advice made me easier. The following also was gratifying :—

“Out upon it ! I have lov'd
Three whole days together ;
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair weather.

“Time shall moult away his wings
Ere he shall discover,
In the whole wide world again,
Such a constant lover.”

Now I had loved for months ; I felt I could have loved for years, and began to consider myself very meritorious and ill-treated. In reading the copy of verses by Mr Cowley, entitled the ‘Chronicle,’ I had

the curiosity to reckon up the mistresses he has immortalized. They amounted to some twenty or thirty. I took them all for beings of flesh and blood, and not the poetical creations I afterwards found them to be; and this was new cause for doubting the propriety of my constancy. Then there was the list of all the little chains and arts, used to keep lovers constant; none of which had been practised on me.

Just as I was repeating some of his verses, shaking at the same time the book with one hand, and thrusting forward and brandishing the other in pompous time to the measure, I met an honest gentleman at the turning of a corner, who was coming with his daughter from Leatherhead, to ascertain the day of the King's visit. I had seen him two or three times at mine host's, and his daughter with him. She was not so bewitchingly handsome then as she was afterwards; but her eyes were a female's, and I thought them bent upon me with an expression of pity. I looked with pity on her's in return, and said to myself, "This is surely the beauteous Catherine, who is to succeed on the resignation of Martha." I returned to Epsom in their company, and found so much sense and sweetness in the young lady's conversation, that by the help of the tenderness that I thought I discerned in her, I experienced a stronger emotion than any which had affected me

during the first days of my intercourse with the two others. She and her father were persuaded to stay in Epsom till after the visit. I accompanied them every where: I paid her the more attention, in order that Miss Warmestre might be told of it; and the day before his Majesty's arrival, I was all but a declared lover; I mean, as far as myself was concerned; for in justice to herself, I must observe, that although of a very innocent and bewitching tenderness, and ready, as it seemed, to meet any honourable avowal on my part, all the responsibility of the occasion was on my side. Still, I did not feel myself engaged. I was in a delightful state of exaltation between my wish to pique Miss Warmestre, the romantic air of my new passion, and the expectation of seeing the King and his court next day, with all their wit, beauty, and gallant plumage.

CHAPTER III.

THE bells awoke me in the morning, ringing a merry peal. When the wind died, they seemed to be calling towards London; when it rose again, they poured their merriment through the town, as if telling us that the King was coming. I got up, and went into the street, where the people were having their breakfasts under the trees, as the gentry do in the time of the races. It was a very animated scene. The morning was brilliant. A fine air tempered the coming warmth. The tables set out with creams and cakes under the trees, had a pretty country look, though the place was crowded. Everybody was laughing, chattering, and expecting; and the lasses, in their boddices and white sleeves, reminded me of Miss Warmestre.

The King, who was an early riser, was expected accordingly: it was not known at what hour; but everybody was resolved not to miss him. One of

our servants had been posted at Ewell, to give us the first intelligence. I returned to breakfast, where I found my new mistress and the family assembled. They were talking of Restoration Poems; an awkward subject, I thought, for the host, but he discussed it not only with ease, but with satisfaction. He was now hastening to be a royalist, and was glad to have the countenance of those who had openly committed themselves on both sides. Waller and Mr Dryden had gone further than he the other way: they now could not go too far for the new one. Not a word therefore was said of their panegyrics on Cromwell; but much good will expressed towards their more enlightened effusions. It was the more necessary to put a good face on the matter, because our host's old connections had latterly been quarrelling with the court; and he took all opportunities of insinuating that their grounds of complaint were new; totally distinct from those points on which he formerly agreed with them. With all my admiration of wit, I could not exactly understand how the Protector's and the King's eulogists could write so well on both subjects, and with so short an interval between; and I marvelled to think, what my poor mother and Mr Saunders would have said, could they have forseen us all quoting the new pamphlets, and some of us hardly able to eat for the pleasure

of expecting the royal visit. But this touched my own conscience. I therefore swallowed the reflection; and persuaded myself, that a variety of new and unheard-of blessings were coming upon us, of which the very chocolate I was drinking was an earnest. The Queen had introduced it from Portugal; and that morning we had been treated with it in her Majesty's honour.

It was not so easy to get over her Majesty's situation at court, which was by this time much talked of. Divers things were said of it among us in a tone of mysteriousness and regret. The Queen was pitied; my friends shook their heads; but Lady Castlemain was very beautiful—extremely beautiful. The ladies, nay the gentlemen, and some very grave ones, manifested an interest respecting the clothes she wore, and the length of her petticoats. Would she come that day?—Hardly.—Undoubtedly—She was of the Queen's bed-chamber. The Queen's bed-chamber! “Lord bless us!” exclaimed an old lady; “she must be very beautiful, to make the King so wicked.” It was agreed, that everybody must get a sight of her face, if only to behold a sorceress.

I listened, and was edified. Things cannot be so bad, thought I, in which every one takes such an interest. Besides, has not love, by universal consent, and from the earliest periods of antiquity,

been a licensed intruder upon the gravest? I found myself, that day, thinking more of Miss Warmestre than my new mistress; and as I thought of her pretty lips and her shape, and then of my own natural conscientiousness, I concluded that King Charles was a very good man, a great lover of chastity, but somehow The excuse was to be found in Ovid: nay, Mr Cowley had excused it. He too had written a coronation-poem, which came with good grace from his pen, because he had been no trimmer. I did not mention it. It contained passages not so easy to be quoted as those of the accommodating wits above mentioned. Perhaps the author would not have been very well satisfied to have them quoted to himself. But his Majesty had not been so long in England, that his visit to any part of his dominions did not look like a new return; and the people were still willing to be intoxicated.

“ There is no Stoic sure who would not now
Ev’n some excess allow;
And grant that one wild fit of cheerful folly
Should end our twenty years of dismal melancholy.”

The fit had lasted a good while; but who was to say what bounds there ought to be to cheerfulness, if our melancholy had been all in the wrong?

While the ladies were dressing, I went out again

to reconnoitre. There was a false alarm of the King's coming, which set them all in a hurry, and which had deceived our out-post at Ewell. It was owing to some carriages with the royal arms, which had arrived in that neighbourhood, and put up at Nonsuch. This turned out to be lucky for us, because it drove us to take our stand in a good place, sooner than we should have done ; for as our home was in a bye-lane, we should have seen nothing, and so had resolved, with others of the gentry thereabouts, to get as near as possible to the gate of Durdans. We found ourselves disappointed by a vast crowd, that seemed to have dropped from the skies ; but here again our misfortune proved an advantage, for our visitor from Leatherhead being known to Mr Evelyn, and that gentleman arriving among the first with some other gentry, he contrived to get us inside the gates, and near to the house-door ; so that we should see the visitors alight at the foot of the terrace, and pass by us. Application had been made to the King, to know if his majesty had any objection to this admission within the gates. " Not I," said he, merrily ;— " admit all within the gates, cattle and stranger, man-servant and maid-servant." This joke was much enjoyed by some, who would have thought it a profanation two years back.

A great noise from the town made us all settle

ourselves in our places, but it was another false alarm. My Lord Carlisle's coach had occasioned it, being all over velvet and gold. This we learnt afterwards, for his Lordship had only come soon, that he might be among the last. We had not waited however above an hour, when the continued cries announced the real coming, though still there were several noblemen in advance, the arrival of whose equipages occasioned a series of pleasing disappointments. Among them were Lords Oxford and Peterborough, and many others, whom I knew so well afterwards, Buckhurst, Bellasyse, Sir George Horton, &c. The Prince de Tarente was there; noble old Hollis (whom a rough voice behind me, in a low tone, called "the ungodly traitor;") and Lord and Lady Sandwich, his lordship passing without a comment from this interloper among the gay, though he was a turncoat and man of the world, and Hollis was a man of principle. Sir Kenelm Digby came upon a horse, which seemed no bigger than himself, so grand was he of stature, and so remarkably bestrode it. Already appeared some beautiful women, and others who grievously disappointed us; for we had made up our minds, that we were to see nothing but Lady Castlemains.

Enter Mr Cowley with my Lord Orrery. I was pleased at having seen him before, and could not but look with reverence on his good-natured,

paternal face, shewing so great a man to be a good one. Mr Waller was there, but nobody pointed him out.

The Earl of Lauderdale with his Countess: he as awkward as a whale, she as ugly as the devil.

The Chancellor, exciting great curiosity, on account of the marriage of his daughter with the Duke of York; an important looking man, something puffing and blowing, and with a heavy person. Yet so impressive is name, and alliance, and great office, that in that first sight of him, especially as he was not without magnificence in his nature, I could not help thinking that his very corpulence added to his dignity.

Trumpets at a distance, after the French fashion:—enter the carriage of my Lord Carlisle, as if, and yet as if not, belonging to them: but at least within the wind of their glory. He issued out upon us, like a vision of blue and silver; so magnificent was his habit.

The Duke of Buckingham, with his Duchess, and his sister the Duchess of Richmond. Not so handsome as I had expected to find him, but elegant and courteous. Little did I think of the pranks I should see him play. He was playing them then, for he said something to the ladies, without moving the expression of his face, which forced them to laugh behind their fans, and then made a very ele-

gant bow to somebody in passing. The Duchess afterwards told me, that he said, "Look at that man to the left, with his chin up in the air, who means to make me a bow." As soon as the ladies entered the door, he returned to the gate to attend on his Majesty, whose arrival was hailed with repeated shouts.

The King!—The silence now seemed to become more silent; and in spite of the opinions in which I had been brought up, I felt what it was to be in the presence of one who inherited sovereign power. His Majesty himself alighted first, and together with Buckingham, presented his hand to assist the Queen. Then came a handsome boy, Mr Crofts (afterwards Duke of Monmouth); and last, assisted by her cousin the Duke, the long looked for beauty, beautiful indeed, triumphantly beautiful. She looked around, and the spectators could hardly refrain from another shout.

The dress at that time was well calculated to set off a woman to advantage. Lady Castlemain was dressed in white and green, with an open bod-dice of pink, looped with diamonds. Her sleeves were green, looped up full on the shoulders with jewelry, and shewing the white shift beneath, richly trimmed with lace. The bod-dice was long and close, with a very low tucker. The petticoat fell in ample folds, but not so long as to keep the

ankles unexposed; and it was relieved from an appearance of too much weight by the very weightiness of the hanging sleeves, which counterpoising its magnitude, and looking flowery with lace and ribbons, left the arms free at the elbows, and fell down behind on either side. The hair was dressed wide, with ringlets at the cheeks; and the fair vision held a fan in one hand, while the Duke led her by the other. When she had ascended the steps, and came walking up the terrace, the lowness of her dress in the bosom, the visibility of her trim ankles, and the flourishing massiness of the rest of her apparel, produced the effect, not of a woman over-dressed, but of a dress displaying a woman; and she came on, breathing rosy perfection, like the queen of the gardens.

I did not see all this at the time; there was not leisure for it; but I had the general impression, which I reduced into detail afterwards. The spectators forgot everybody but the King and her. His Majesty, at that period of his life, (he was little more than thirty,) looked at his best, and I thought I never saw a manlier face, or a more graceful figure. He was in mulberry coloured velvet and gold. He not only took off his hat in return to our salutations, but persisted in keeping it so, as if in the presence of the whole people of England. This fairly transported us. The

royal features were strong, somewhat grim even, and he had a black brow and a swarthy complexion, reminding us of the southern part of his stock; but there was good temper in the smile of his wide though not unhandsome mouth; and his carriage was eminently that of the gentleman. Lady Castlemain at that time was little more than twenty. The Queen, though short of stature, was young also, and looked handsomer than we expected; and as all parties seemed pleased, and his Majesty's little son came on the other side of the lady of the bed-chamber, we pretended to ourselves, that things were not so bad as report made them; though never more convinced, that everything which had been related was true.

Some other ladies followed; then the Duke and Duchess,* with more; and then Prince Rupert; the Duke a stiff, dry looking man, very different from his brother; the Prince harsh and plain featured, but with a keen eye; neither of them graceful or princely. The Duchess had her father's tendency to the robust; and as we did not hear her talk, I did not think her so good-looking as she appeared to me afterwards.

When the doors closed, and the spectators moved away, I felt dull, in spite of the presence of Miss

* Of York.

Randolph (the name of my new mistress). I thought this an injustice; and she talked so sweetly during our return, that I found myself more in love with her than before, and behaved accordingly. Lady Castlemain had eclipsed Miss Warmestre. She had at the same time made all womankind still more delightful in my eyes; and I began to dress Miss Randolph after her fashion, which mightily improved her.

In the afternoon, as nothing was to be thought of but the royal visitors, we strolled again to Durdans, and were unexpectedly gratified with the sight of them, the windows being open. The house seemed full of music, which was constantly going on; and now and then a party would issue from the trees, and cross over the lawn. Miss Randolph entered so well into the pleasure of the scene, though with perfect propriety, that I was charmed with her. I did my best to please her, like a ready-made coxcomb as I was, not allowing myself to reflect how I might engage her to think too well of me; and, in the innocence and tenderness of her heart, she ventured to say, when I asked her if she should not miss the gay nobles and cavaliers, "Not if I see you."

A circumstance, which occurred the same afternoon, destined me to see her but a few times again till long afterwards. Her father, after we had gra-

tified our curiosity, returned with her to Leatherhead. I was restless; and after accompanying them as far as I was permitted on horseback, returned to the scene of interest. His Majesty loved to see his court and the ladies on horseback. Lord Berkeley had proposed to shew them a hawkery of his in the neighbourhood, and as I was carelessly riding along, I met the whole court coming out of Chalk Lane upon the downs. The ladies were in riding-habits, with hats and feathers, the hats large and looped up on one side, the feathers of various hue; which with the stirring sound of the horses, the gallant look of the cavaliers, and the talk and laughter prevailing as they came forth, made a beautiful shew. The wind was higher than the day before, and brought the sound towards me. I turned out of the way; and from an impulse of respect, got off my horse, and stood waiting uncovered.

The King said something which appeared to turn the eyes of his court upon me, and a light female voice made a remark which I did not hear; when I was roused from my confusion by another which rose into a pretty shriek. A feather had escaped: the wind wafted it towards me; and by good luck, I succeeded in catching it in my hat. "Well reclaimed! well reclaimed!" said the King, making use of a falconer's term. I made a gesti-

culatation expressive of my ignorance to whom the feather belonged, and my want of pretension to the right of bringing it, if I knew. I was accordingly proceeding to hand it to the gentleman nearest me, when his Majesty told me to mount, and bring it myself.

My father had put me so early on horseback, that I had grown up a master of the manège. I vaulted upon my good beast, still keeping my hat in hand, and securing the feather with my thumb; and so went towards the King's party, which was a little in advance of the rest.

"'Tis mine, sir," said a beauty, holding out her hand, whom I afterwards found to be Miss Stewart. She would have added something by way of thanks, but her voice died in a little incoherent laugh, as if she knew not what to say. I could not help stealing a look at my Lady Castlemain, who as if to supply the deficiency, and pleasantly taking up the King's fancy, said "We are beholden to your art, sir. Methinks, you should be in good practice." The King had stopped all the riders, that Miss Stewart might secure the feather. The Queen, I observed, was not there. I blushed, and answered that I had no pretensions, to be a falconer. "You ride as if you had some pretensions, too, young gentleman," said the King: "what is your name and quality?" My cheeks blushed deeper, and

then deeper still for the blushing, as I replied, that I was the only survivor of a decayed but ancient family, and that my name was Esher. "Esher!" cried the King, turning round to his company:—"Why, that is the name of the old cock of the wood, who was so hard in the dying. Nay, man," continued he, seeing the tears fairly start in my eyes at this irreverend speech, which yet I knew not how to resent, "I did not mean to hurt thee: but so brave and open a spirit as thy father's ought to have been on the right side." This compliment charmed away the tear, and gave me a new confidence. To be plain, I became a royalist on the spot. "Doubtless, sir," said the Duke of Buckingham, "the Colonel was a very worthy, mistaken old gentleman; but he has given your Majesty a younger subject to make amends." "If it should ever be my good hap," said I, with a bow full of gratitude, "to risk my life for his Majesty, I trust I could shew what my father himself might have done, had he lived in these happy times." "Well said, i'faith," cried the King: "we must keep our new friend in sight, eh, my lord? I doubt whether there is to be much fighting and risking one's life again very speedily; but there are perils at court, in which a young gentleman might try his mettle. What say ye? Have we a stray scarf or deputy stick for Mr

Esher?" It was replied by somebody, that there would perhaps be a vacancy among the Duke's pages in spring. "Well," said his Majesty, "put me in mind to speak to my brother of it: and so, Sir Knight of the Merlin, in spring time us see thee again."

The King made a gracious gesture with his hand; and backing my horse quickly, the head of which I always kept to the circle, I contrived to get properly out of the way. The court passed on; and in a few minutes I found myself at home, scarcely knowing how I got thither.

CHAPTER IV.

I DID not recover from my whirl of satisfaction for some days. All my friends congratulated me as if they thought me a great man at once, and I could not help thinking there was more respect than usual in the letter my guardian wrote me in return for the news. Indeed I now thought myself both great and happy for life. I was to go to court: the King himself had spoken to me, and promised me a place there: a Duke was to look to it: I had seen the greatest beauties of the age, and they had smiled on me: I was to be conversant with the wits; I should know Cowley and Waller, and Sir John Denham, and Mr Dryden, besides my Lord Buckhurst and Sir Charles Sedley, who had already begun to be talked of: and I should come down occasionally into my old neighbourhood to cut a figure in its eyes, and tell of my glories to Miss Randolph. That tender creature (who re-

ceived the news with seriousness, but I thought with pride) would live for me till it was proper to marry, like a nymph of the woods; and I should write verses to her, and make her my serious passion, while I put lighter feathers into the caps of the Dorises and Clarindas. I already began to consider a name for her, which should be as long as Saccharissa, but better; that sugary appellation being not only bad in itself, but having been much joked among some friends of mine, years back; though all which they said against it could not make me think ill of the sweet poet.

Meanwhile I was left to entertain my fancies by myself, my mistress having returned with her father to Leatherhead. I was sorry for this; because, though I speak of my then behaviour with my present knowledge of it, I took myself to be seriously in love, not being aware that the presence of the beloved object is all in all, and that I ought not only to have missed her, but to have cared for nothing in the comparison. Had I but touched her lips (which had been prevented by my never seeing her alone) I had so much of the boy in my love, that I should have taken it for a still more serious one than I did; and this is what disconcerted me so much with regard to Miss Warmestre. I thought it particularly cruel in her to forget me, after the gratitude I felt for her kindness; and

wondered how she could cease to think of the pleasant hours we had passed, and the places we had met in. My own readiness to love another was not taken into the account. I thought it forced upon me by Miss Warmestre's behaviour; and the exceeding pity I took on myself made me regard my affection the more ill used, the more faithless it became.

Miss Randolph's father was a shrewd, steady old gentleman, who did not chuse to trust his daughter too much with an enthusiastic young fellow, even though he had a small patrimony, and abilities to make it larger. The father of Miss Warmestre seemed to have acted on a different principle; and hints, which I cared nothing about, were often given to that effect in the family among whom I resided. How different were those people from my own family, who never talked of any love but that of a divine nature, and who made a point of scandalizing nobody but themselves (for unworthy sinners) and the authorities for the time being. My over delicate mother never opened her lips to me on the subject of the passion, even though I knelt down with young ladies, and though it turned out that she thought I was smitten. Accordingly, I was ready, in the midst of all the pieties in the world, to take anything for love, that came near me in the shape of a female; while the

discourse of my new acquaintances, among whom I used to wonder to find myself, and still more to find them so gay and worldly, almost began to make me doubt whether the precautions of Mr Randolph were not dictated by a subtlety of speculation, very different from what appeared on the face of them. I drove this idea from me as an ungenerous notion, not suitable to my nature; and had Miss Randolph been present, should have made her a declaration by way of amends. As it was, I began to find excuses for Miss Warmestre. I had always considered her my real first love, since the day she gave me an opportunity, during a fit of romps, to salute her: and now, had she been with us, and shewn that she had not forgotten me, which of the two was I to keep company with (the polite phrase in those times)? Thus had I a world of love on my hands, and nobody to make it to.

In the midst of these refinements, a cousin arrives from Miss Warmestre (there is no end of cousins,) who looks very sily at me all the evening; and next day, when she found me alone, puts into my hand a little box. "It is from your cousin," said she, "who has been expecting to return every day, and see the court: her father promised her; but the promise was not kept. Had she foreseen her disappointment, she would have sent you her

compliments the sooner." Here was a theme for my repentance! I accused myself a thousand times of ingratitude and precipitancy; but all prudently and to myself. There was something in the new cousin's face, though very pretty, that hindered me from making her acquainted with my feelings. All her hints to that purpose were lost upon me, which I thought disappointed her. I got alone as soon as possible; and, opening my treasure, found a box of sweetmeats! There was something childish in this—perhaps a joke. It looked very like one of my sweet cousin's merry faces, when she would come to me with the kindest air conceivable, and then start off betwixt ridicule and good-nature, and have a run for it. But then a message had been delivered with it, and a sort of apology. A messenger of that kind implied a confidante; and above all, the box was only half full. She had eaten the rest herself. Here, thought I, is the delicacy and the cordiality of participation. She trusts to her honest nature for a good construction; and in love, the smallest trifle, nay, even what would appear a grossness without it, becomes the most delicate of refinements. It must be owned that I was prepared to throw a grace over one species of love, if not very likely to distinguish it from another.

But what was I to do with my two loves, now

that the first had come back? I congratulated myself a thousand times, that I had made no declaration to Miss Randolph; but what shewed a little bit of the rascal in me, and forced me to invent a thousand fresh excuses (which I must own I easily did) was, that I found myself riding occasionally to Leatherhead to see her sweet ingenuous face, and find her looking at me all the while I was talking to her father. The old gentleman at length gave me to understand that he expected me to say something, or put an end to my visits. I had not heard again from Miss Warmestre: I fancied all her charms in Miss Randolph, with the exception of face; and even there she grew handsomer every day. Her eyes had not Miss Warmestre's mirth, but they were fuller and deeper. I could not help feeling, that the power of gravity in love promised a greater charm than mirth: and had it been possible for me to consider myself disengaged, or to marry, (and the latter the old gentleman himself would not have allowed, till I had prospects of increasing my fortune,) it is certain that I could have married at once, if Miss Randolph would have had me; and so taken my chance for the rest of my days. The whole secret was, that my senses were interested. My fancy adorned them with passages out of Waller and Suckling; and though the King and his court had swept me away at the moment,

especially as it contained such beautiful women, I found, or thought I found, that my love was superior to my vanity. However desirous of elevation, I could do without the one, though not the other. What I was to have said to the King, in case I should have succeeded in putting myself at this fine disadvantage with his Majesty, I had not determined. I did not stop to consider the immense distance between us, nor whether he had not forgotten all about me, five minutes after I left him. Love put me on a level with kings. Kings themselves, said the poets, submit to love; and had I not witnessed the truth of the saying in the person of my Lady Castlemain? I had got a vague notion, that in presenting myself at court, (which I had never thought of omitting to do) I should even have had courage enough to confess myself to his Majesty. Servants marry as well as masters. Pages and cup-bearers fall in love, as well as kings; and the King being such a lover himself, would know how to permit the passion in another. It was lucky for me I did not vent these notions to my acquaintances. I fancy them now looking at one another, and then staring me in the face for a madman.

The best of it was, that such reflections were superfluous, and involved no necessity of acting up to them. I was obliged to abstain from going to

Leatherhead. I heard nothing from Miss Warmestre; and not knowing which to love, and concluding that nobody but the parents were in the wrong, I made up a mistress for my imagination, compounded of both, and so managed to preserve my future interest at court. The only solid conclusion I came to, was, that if a person so well brought up and virtuously disposed as myself, could get into such a dilemma with the soft passion, and become liable to misconstruction, how much was not to be said in behalf of kings and their temptations; and what an excellent nature in especial did not his gracious Majesty possess, condescending as he was to the youth in question, and disposed to the same tastes for wit, poetry, and virgin sweetness! The good opinion of myself that gave rise to these interweavings of mine and the royal conscience, and a good deal of personal address, arising from confidence in my movements, as well as the wish to please, and from the very ignorance of the artificial substitutes for it that were taught upon system, never allowed me to dream that I should make any mistakes in good breeding. It turned out that I had something to learn on that point; but I was not aware, till long afterwards, how much the success I experienced arose from my very fopperies.

I had now to pass the time as well as I could till spring. I found this difficult enough, notwith-

standing the ease with which I thought I could have given up the court. My circle of acquaintance, however, had much increased since my new prospects; and I should have fallen in love with a third pitying damsel, had not mine host, who had designs on me for a kinswoman of his own, given out that I was engaged. He added that I was a dangerous fellow: and the union of these two pieces of information made all the mothers afraid. Now and then, to be sure, I had broad hints given me, that if I declared off from my old flame, and would openly prefer some more attractive daughter, my infidelity would be thought no obstruction to new vows. But I was uneasy in my conscience. The hints about one old flame, reminded me that I had two; and though abundantly willing to be caressed both for my own merits and for my future greatness, I was fain to oblige my guardian's friend by staying much at home of an evening, and considering what was to be done the better to prepare myself for court. Why my guardian himself did not take me to his house, especially after all that had been said, I often asked myself with wonder; but nothing was remarked upon it; and making up my mind that things might now reasonably wait for explanation till I got to court, (which I was led to identify with every satisfaction upon earth,) I set about stocking

myself with such chattels and accomplishments as I conceived most necessary to put me in advance with my good fortune.

My host had set me upon this piece of providence, which in the liveliness of my expectations I should have overlooked. He called in to his aid a youth in the neighbourhood, who knew the wife's brother's cousin of a friend of one of his Majesty's gentlemen-porters; and I thought the lad never would have done measuring my good fortune with his eyes, while he talked of the clothes it was necessary I should possess. Our choice was distracted between colours, and velvets, and embroideries. Cloths and camblets were to be discussed; laces, and pinkings; ribbons infinite; gloves, perfumes, and plumed hats. Then I was to have a lute, and I did not know how to play the lute. A lute at Cobham would have been the voice of sin; a trap of Satan to catch souls with. My soul, in truth, had often been caught with it, for I was very fond of music, and had been tempted to learn to play at night-time, with cotton to damp the strings; but I could not contrive it. Mr Saunders's wakeful eye had been in every part of the house. Now how was I to learn to play the lute properly, and such a short time before me? Dancing too. I had not even learned to dance. Strange, thought I, that it should have been looked upon as a thing

heavenly to abolish every innocent recreation ! And the more I thought on this point, the more I found to quarrel with in my old education. The most innocent people dance, said I ; shepherds and country lasses. The Jews danced. Miriam danced and played on the timbrel, and so did the royal psalmist. I have heard him quoted a thousand times in defence of a good slaughter ; why not in behalf of a saraband ? He fought, inasmuch as he was a chosen warrior, like the Protector ; but he danced and sung because he was an accomplished monarch, like the King. I did not carry the simile any further. The angels—No ; I was aware of nothing in behalf of the dancing of angels ; but they sang. “ What know we,” says Mr Waller,

“ Of the blest above,
But that they sing, and that they love ? ”

Amiable certainty ! And is not this alone an argument invincible against lessons of crabbed self-denial ? It was thus I brought religion to court, playing a lute, and looking like my Lady Castlemain in the likeness of St Cecilia.

My mother would have held with me to a certainty, thought I, had not Mr Saunders been in the way. Her spirit was too gentle and beautiful not to have discerned the merit of all the harmonies of intercourse. My father—I could not so well intro-

duce his helmet and his glorious death into the picture ; but, said I, who thought we should have lived to see this day ? and who knows that my father, with his fine sense and his great heart, would not have seen equal reason with so many pious divines and disinterested warriors to incorporate with the new state of things, which, in their opinion, as well as his, the world was never to behold, and which nothing but a providence could have brought about ? Thus would I stand meditating, with a doublet in my hand, or a knot of ribbons ; and if any thing was wanting to the conclusion, the ribbons made it up. The love of dress at that time of life is so strong, if there is a disposition that way, and circumstances encourage it, that I not only do not profess to have overcome it entirely even now, but I cannot but remember, with a pang of astonishment, how upon an occasion of far greater gravity than this, being, in truth, no less than my mother's death, I could not hinder myself from feeling an absolute pleasure (I would say delight, if I did not hope the word was too forcible) in the contemplation of the new and more gallant-looking clothes, which my guardian had caused to be made for me.

The lute was procured, with which I was to take my part among the gallants ; my new acquaintance, whose admiration of me increased at every ribbon I tied on, undertaking to be my teacher. The

clothes also were fixed upon ; but I was already wiser than my instructor, and sent to a London tailor to make them up. Furthermore, he was admonished to consult the court tailors, if he did not already happen to be one of them : in which case he might have a chance of adding himself to the number ; though not, if he failed in one iota of good taste. I warned him, (such was my tact for the new world I was about to enter, and the superiority I already felt to vulgar mistakes), that he was to be especially careful how he exceeded in respect to colours and finery, plainness and modesty being the side on which a gentleman should err ; though my opinion was in such danger of being confined to externals, that I never thought more unduly of myself in other matters, than for being right upon this one.

My vanity soon received a check. I felt absolutely shocked, when upon enquiring with a serene air of security what else there was, which I was bound to get acquainted with, before I made my bow among the gallants, I learned that there was an accomplishment more indispensibly necessary than dress itself (at least the ladies, said my new acquaintance, with a nod, seem to think so), and of which I had scarcely even heard. This was the knowledge of romances ; the ponderous tomes of Calprenede and Scuderi. I had heard of them, and barely, at our

college, where the strictness of the presbyterian tutors did not permit them; nor could they be smuggled in, like the poets. At home they were never mentioned. Miss Randolph had spoken of them in such a manner as to let me see she was acquainted with them; but she was shy in putting forth her accomplishments; particularly in the presence of those who did not possess them. Here was a dilemma! I was given to understand, that the courtiers did nothing but read these romances from morning to night; that the King read them; that my Lord Orrery (the friend of Suckling) was writing one; and that some great ladies, the Duchess of Newcastle in particular, fairly talked romances.

Luckily, I was passionately fond of reading. The winter was before me. The size and number of the tomes did not frighten me, as they seemed to do my informant, who stood measuring them in imagination with his hands and eyes, as he had just done myself. I was prepared to read hard for my degree, and to issue forth as great a master of the arts of courtship as Ovid or Calprenede himself. I stood smiling therefore at my friend's wondering descriptions, making up by a movement of self-love for the misery I had sustained in being compelled to acknowledge a deficiency before an inferior; but how was my horror renewed, and in what

terms shall I express this climax of mortification, on hearing that the greater part of these indispensable folios were untranslated; that is to say, in French! French, of which I knew not a syllable, though it seems everybody else did, and though the court spoke it as much as they did English, and more!

The expression of my countenance must have betrayed all that I felt; for my friend, with a modest pride, thought fit to assure me that he was not a perfect master of the language himself, though it was very easy, and only required a little practice. He read it, but could not speak it. A thought struck me immediately. The same judgment that directed me in my ordinances to the tailor, (whom I should now have to hasten for another purpose,) impelled me to make a blow, like Cæsar, on the side of Gaul. I resolved on the spot, with a transport and a sense of my resources, that seized my friend with admiration, and quite restored me to my own good graces, to convey myself forthwith across the channel, and grapple with the French themselves for a mastery over their language.

No sooner said, than done. I was impatient till I got my admirer out of the house, and sat down to write to my guardian. He sent an answer, better than was expected; for he said he had begun making arrangements directly, for the prosecution

of a design that he heartily approved; that he had had such an intention for me himself; and that finally, he himself would go with me; one of the objects he had nearest his heart being to further the new and splendid views which had opened upon the son of his worthy friend, and which were such, he was persuaded, as the excellent judgment and solid goodness of that friend himself would have desired for me, had he lived to see times so reasonable as the present, and so calculated to make true patriots of one accord. These fine long periods, and a new cant that had come up, about reason and good sense, were now only what I looked for from this worthy guardian of mine; albeit his old friends, the presbyterians, had lately had a fresh and bitter quarrel with the court; and I could not, for the life of me, see what patriotism had to do with his new measures. I took, however, what he said of my father, for a very sensible thing; and as I really knew nothing of politics, nor ever thought about them, I was excused for it. I felt certain that there were good and brave men on the side of the King, as well as pleasant ones; my father might have been one of them; and if I was not secure of being as good as he, which I doubted, I was resolved not to disgrace him by being bad. Brave I could not help being, both as being his son and a gentleman; and I held myself destined to throw a


new lustre over the family of the Eshers, by being as pleasant as anybody.

Would Miss Warmestre come with my guardian? Was she to be our companion in the voyage, and go and perfect herself in her knowledge of the French tongue? For I remembered she did know something of it. She used to torment me with saying something in French, or singing a bit of a song, and then dancing and humming about with an air of superiority. I called to mind one occasion in particular, on which she went about in this manner, laying her cheek against the sun, and winking her eyes, with an air so bewitchingly insolent, that I ran up in order to put myself on a level with her by a kiss; and it was in the struggle which followed, that I got one. It was the first kiss I ever had, and the thought of it renewed all my tenderness. I watched at the window till my uncle came, expecting more and more to see her, and thinking how pleasantly we might visit the alleys and bowers of the French gardens. He came, but he was alone. He was pleased to compliment me in strong terms on my growth and appearance; and brought me divers modest remembrances on the part of his daughter. On expressing the hope that "my lovely cousin" might have come with him, he smiled at the assured air with which I said it, so different from my former quiet manner; and re-

plied, that lovely cousins were not often met with in voyages by the side of fine young fellows. I pretended to smile too at my forgetfulness of so notorious a truth ; and next day, in good spirits, we set off.

CHAPTER V.

IN going to France, I scarcely considered myself as travelling a different road from that which led to the English court. In fact, it was no other. It was a little circuitous; but not at all tedious, as waiting would have been. I might have made my way into the court next week, and only distanced myself for ever, by betraying my ignorance of its favourite language. My heart died within me a hundred times, to think what would have been the catastrophe, had anything French been said to me on the day of the plume. But now I was secure. I felt a confidence in myself, to which the very roughness of the weather, and the tumbling of our little vessel contributed; for I had just sense enough of the novelty to feel that it gave me no fear, and that I was beginning my knowledge of the world. When the sea gave us a cuff now and then, and the brine spit in my face, I imitated the careless



look of the old seamen, and found a new pleasure in assuming these tranquil grandeurs. I regretted I was not going on some errand more mature;—to carry an ultimatum of peace or war, or fetch a lady for a king.

I shall not dwell on the inexorable fate, that sooner or later lays low the pride of all new seamen. We soon reached the coast; and I had scarcely emerged from the cabin, when I found myself riding on a mermaid of an old woman, whose age, sex, and office, robust shoulders, and ante-diluvian wrinkles, formed a compound I should never have thought of seeing anywhere, much less on the gallant coast of France. The politeness of the interior re-assured me; and when we got to Paris, every girl above the condition of a beggar, appeared to me a Miss Warmestre. My guardian had taken care to be provided with a French servant, who cheated and lorded it over us with an air of irresistible deference. If I had had no better reasons for learning the language, I should have made haste to do so, in order to get rid of this fellow's superiority.

We took a lodging at the house of an elderly gentlewoman, over against the English ambassador's. She kept some lively company; and in the interval of my riding and my romance-reading, I had the pleasure of conversing with our fair neigh-

bours, which soon got me on. Had my guardian been absent, I should have fallen in love with one of the numerous pretty girls, eminent for their black eyes, white teeth, and *mignardises* of expression: but by a manœuvring which I did not discover for some time, and which he excused by some strange reasons that very much disgusted me, I was rarely left to myself, except when employed in reading. When I found it out, I had passed a good deal of the time, and habituated myself to a particular mode of life; and though at greater liberty after the discovery, Mr Warmestre contrived by an artful candour, and some allusions not quite so pleasant, but still more powerful, to my father and mother, to keep my naturally fine conscience in decent order. But what did it more effectually, and to a degree that astonished myself, was an illness I had, and the reading of my romances.

The ferment of spirits I underwent in a new metropolis, (and indeed it was the first I had seen, for I had not even been to London yet, so little did young country gentlemen travel in those days,) had conspired, I believe, with the vexation my guardian had caused me, and a resolution to be extremely my own master, to throw me into a fit of illness. He attended me with great care, assisted by the mistress of the house and the servant, for

which I thought myself bound to be thankful; and a niece on a visit (for so they called her) was permitted to bring me flowers, and pay me compliments on my style of speaking. With her I should infallibly have commenced a new love (not the first I had now experienced in Paris), had I not taken her, in the first place, for the prop and stay of her ancient kinswoman, who made sermons fit to tempt any less conscientious person to the very offences she deprecated; and secondly, had I not been affected, in a very remarkable manner, by those great folios of romance, which they read at such a rate in the English court.

How they read them there, and yet had ladies of the bedchamber, I knew not. I had not then discovered the secret by which people can read of impossible pitches of virtue, which they flatter themselves they could practise if it were the custom, while they indulge themselves in all the more agreeable licences of the time. I was not aware with how fine and charitable an instinct the fair readers took the portraits of heroines to themselves, all the virtues imagined in the book being natural to them, while their faults were nothing but an accident; or, on the other hand, (if the reflection was necessary that way,) the over-straining of a particular virtue shewing how impossible it was, while the other good qualities were as true, and

manifested in their own characters. Then again, the speeches made by lovers in real life, partook in spirit, if not in letter, of the highest flights of the romance, and proved how natural it was for women to be worshipped in that manner. Nay, if they did not, they ought. The more belief, the greater the encouragement. In short, if there was nothing more in it, there was a fine stately make-believe; and of what else was half the world made up? If everybody were as good as one's self, all the world might be heroes and angels; if not, it was no fault of ours, and should not hinder us from contemplating our perfections in those unstained mirrors. What completed the resemblance was, that every heroine of romance had a dozen lovers.

I read, and I believed. My education had fitted me for romantic impressions. All the levity in my spirits had not hindered me from retaining a sense that I wanted something solid on which to build its ornaments; and here I found it. Here was high principle, and, as luck would have it, in the most earthly shape. Here kings knelt, and ladies reigned; and empires, though prodigious things, were not worth a glove; and the heroines were so virtuous, that if they had been otherwise, nothing would have been missed out of so vast a stock. Myself and all my acquaintances were gifted with crowns and virtues on the spot. We were also

fifty people in succession. However great may have been the additional zest with which these books were received on their first appearance in their own country, by reason of the living characters that were supposed to be shadowed under Grecian and Saracen names, it surely could not have been greater than that with which I discovered fair English faces lurking in every veil. Miss Warmestre was all the sprightlier beauties, Miss Randolph the grave ones. Miss Newen was Alcidiana, who was too divine even to be adored. When the heroine presented herself in her most royal light, she was Lady Castlemain or Miss Stewart. Lady Castlemain was Cleopatra, and Mandane, and the divine Statira. King Charles was Oroondates. For my part, besides being all the other heroes, I was now Tyridates, awakened by a cruel inquietude, and going down to the shore of Alexandria, that is, Calais, to breathe my amorous thoughts over the water. Now I was Coriolanus, prince of Africa; now Ibrahim, the illustrious Bashaw; now Brutus, that gallant young nobleman, who was taught love and philosophy by Miss Warmestre, otherwise Damo, the daughter of Pythagoras. I was also Polexander, who was carried off to France by a pirate, that is to say my guardian, and there received an education not to have been looked for in the Canary Islands. Nei-

ther could I conceal from myself that I was, or might possibly be about to be, a gentleman of the name of Ponce de Leon, for whom Almahide, to wit, some reigning beauty at the court of Whitehall, had the boldness to refuse a Sovereign.

The "Map of the Country of Tenderness," which has occasioned so much raillery, in the romance where Brutus makes a figure, gave me such delight, that I drew out a dozen maps in imitation of it. *Inclination* seemed to be the most natural of all names for a flowing river. The villages of *Jolis Vers* and *Epîtres Galantes*, I peopled with the wits of the court, and found them as reasonably occupied in tasks analogous to those names, as the writer of the finest satire in the world did his rhyming and love-lorn gentry in the episodes of his great work.* Mr Waller pointed out this resemblance to me when I had the happiness to become acquainted with him. As to the cities of *Tendre sur Estime*, and *Tendre sur Inclination*, I arrived at them with as serious a pleasure as any traveller could at Chalons sur Marne, or Berwick-upon-Tweed; nor would I take my oath that I could not amuse myself with a similar journey now, in spite of all the sense and reason I have gathered by the way. One must rest one's sense and reason somewhere.

* Whom the author here alludes to, I cannot say.—*Edit.*

There is one thing I have observed in reading the very dullest of these old books; and that is, that by the time you have entered pretty deeply into one of the volumes, you have fairly a *habit* of reading! You go on for the custom's sake. I have noticed the same thing, if one goes to bed early, under the notion of getting up the sooner. By the time the dawn arises, one has got used to the bed, and does not like to quit it. If to this we add dreams of self-love and of loving heroines, no wonder we sleep on.

Upon the whole, these romances had a surprising effect upon me. They joined with the illness I underwent in helping to allay that craving and restlessness, which the spirits of youth would otherwise have thrown me into; especially in the novelty of my situation. I believe, when I left my bed, and looked abroad again, I hardly knew whether I saw the French king (Louis XIV) with greater pleasure as the friend and ressembler of my own royal patron, or as the Alexander of Mademoiselle Scuderi.

But what would have astonished some people was, that I did not like my romances the less, upon becoming acquainted with the writings of the French wits. My lute, be sure, was not forgotten all this while. It introduced me to French songs; the songs introduced more and better songs; I

made enquiries, and above all, I went to see plays; and thus I became acquainted with Corneille and Molière, with Malleville, Charleval, Lainez, and the jolly old shoemaker Billaut, who died that year; and I also read Balzac and Voiture. Suckling, to be sure, and Davenant had accustomed me to the union of seriousness and mirth; but I was proof even against the jokes of Molière. I heard remote hints that romances were to go out of fashion, and that great confusion had been caused among the polite parties where their language used to be spoken. But I knew nothing of all this. I felt like a youth, in love with everything that was gallant and striking; and while I laughed with the new French wits, I loved, and carried a great heart with the old. It was lucky, that not having been presented at the English court, and yet having a promise of being there, my guardian persuaded me, that my inability to be presented at the court of France made it as well that I should not seek company in Paris till I paid it another visit. I might have witnessed the decline of lofty speeches at the Hotel Rambouillet, and I might also have seen the face of Mademoiselle Scuderi, which for an adorer of her books was not so advisable. I therefore set down Molière for a witty actor, not well acquainted with high life; and eagerly seized the admission, that his *Precieuses* were a pair of country

pretenders, who had no right to imitate the language of the well-bred.

In this temper I was encouraged by a new English acquaintance, whom my guardian had found for me, and who had come upon business to the ambassador. What his business was I did not enquire, having already learnt that secrecy was a necessary thing in affairs of government; and that none kept secrets so well as gentlement. He was a stout man, approaching the middle period of life, robust but active, with a huge forehead somewhat clouded, but an unaffected smile, and an address of the most pleasing description. He had little acquaintance with books, and did not pretend to it; but the world he professed to know well, and he was willing to give me the benefit of his experience. I was told that he had been an officer in the service of Cromwell, but was converted to the cause of government, though it had used him harshly; and this, in a very open manner, he afterwards told me himself. I need not add, that such a person was welcome to my conscience. He said that men grew wiser as they grew older; that private good must give way to the public benefit; that courts could not do everything, even when disposed to do it; and that it became a man like himself, who had seen a great deal of trouble, and not behaved ill under it, to practise the virtue of patience. The

task, he confessed, was hard, but therefore the more fitting for an old soldier; and he had latterly had promises from some noble persons, whom he should think ill of his own heart if he doubted.

I gave the more credit to my new acquaintance, especially for the command he exercised over his feelings, from a little circumstance that occurred, while he was describing some of these persons. We were drinking, and my guardian, in suddenly pushing the bottle, happened to give him a jog. He changed colour; but smiling immediately, observed how difficult it was to get rid of bad habits. "In Ireland," he said, "he had seen a bloody quarrel, for a cause no greater, and that with an old friend." He did not affect any particular friendship for Mr Warmestre. His behaviour to him had a reserve in it, different from the entire openness of manner with which he treated myself; a distinction which flattered me, though it made me take pity on my poor guardian, whom I had learnt to consider not so strong-minded as well-intentioned.

Captain Sandford (for so he was called) proceeded in his pictures of the court, which deeply interested me. He surprised me by admitting some of the wildest stories of the rakery of the young nobles; and not less by adding, that persons of the same age and condition were equally wild in Cromwell's time, though less candid about it. It would be

better, he said, if the young men could be wiser, but it was due to them to acknowledge, that there was a gallantry and good-heartedness in their scorning to be thought better of than they deserved; and all these heats of youth would go off, and leave a set of admirable statesmen. Besides, though some stories were true, others were scandalously false. A scuffle had taken place in which my Lord Buckhurst was concerned, and a man happened to be killed. Oh! cry the hypocritical, who never drew a sword even by accident, here is a murder! But what was the real case? A thief is pursued; my Lord Buckhurst is among the pursuers; and the wrong man, in the turmoil, meets with a misfortune. My Lord Buckhurst, continued the Captain, is a most agreeable and worthy young gentleman, though a little careless. He is already celebrated for his wit and poetry, and will make a shining character. Sir Charles Sedley is wilder, but still very amiable. How can we entertain harsh thoughts of the nature that could shew such tenderness as he does in those simple and agreeable lines (and here the Captain repeated them)—

“ Were I of all these woods the lord,
One berry from thy hand
Would more sincere delight afford,
Than all this proud command.”

This beautiful passage (for such it really is,—a true

touch of nature and love) transported me. I quoted twenty passages from the French songs, including the pretty turn about the empire and the kiss from my friend Charleval, and found that it beat them all. I did not know that there was anything in Suckling or Waller that I preferred to it. Captain Sandford went on to say, that such things were written every day by the new wits. The wine, and my admiration, warmed him; and he gave me very agreeable portraits of a number of other courtiers. The Killigrews were excellent people, particularly the Doctor, who was a preacher at once reasonable and fervid. Mr Chiffinch, a particular servant of the King's, was a most easy, good-natured man; too good-natured, they said, like his master, and a very fool towards the sex; but the Captain professed to know nothing except from hearsay and a very little intercourse. All he had seen was good and excusable, everything being considered; and if he believed some of the wilder stories, it was because the parties owned to them among his friends. More might be true; but he was certain, at heart, the young gentlemen were as good as anybody. There was the Lord Rochester, an absolute blushing boy, and yet already a wit and a fine gentleman. He wrote verses at fourteen, which Mr Waller pronounced to be the oldest young verses he had ever read; and the Captain repeated those lines ad-

dressed to Charles on his Restoration, dated from Wadham College, and beginning

“ Virtue’s triumphant shrine ! who dost engage
At once three kingdoms in a pilgrimage ;
Which in ecstatic duty strive to come
Out of themselves, as well as from their home,” &c.

But the Duke of Buckingham, Master of the Horse, was the principal subject of the Captain’s eulogy. He had no greater ambition than to be admitted to the honour of kissing the hand of that great man, who, bred up in courts and camps, partook of the best spirit of all parties ; and who had married, with the approbation of that illustrious person, the daughter of the great Parliamentary general Fairfax ; a lady, as the witty yet solemn poet expressed it (another true patriot, now a member of parliament), bred up

“ Under the discipline severe
Of Fairfax and the starry Vere.”

Was it likely, asked Captain Sandford, that the Lord Fairfax, one of the most conscientious of men, whose behaviour in the course of the war he had happened to note well, should bestow his daughter on a man such as the Duke was now described to be, and (more than that) should live with him for years in the utmost harmony, and in the exercise of all piety and virtue ? It is true, his Grace, being still a young man, and overflowing with a kindly

nature, had given into some licences of the times, which Abraham Cowley himself (as I had justly observed) had not scrupled to find an excuse for in this universal excitation of men's minds; fortunate, if they never took a worse direction, nor converted the licence into the old open bloodshed, and secret and worse vices. But the Duke was a wise man, and knew where to stop. The Captain only wished, that some others of graver character had as much real wisdom, and did not undertake to hurry a good-humoured prince into too sudden a reformation. They had vices perhaps of their own,—pride certainly,—which in a Christian's eye were less pardonable; and though they were persons of great merit in some things, might have seen farther into others, had they known more of the world. Colleges did not teach everything, nor even adversity. There were some men, who learnt more in a day from casual observation, and in talk apparently trifling, than the pride of learning might discover in years; and it was found, after all, that the gravest men might partake of the very vices they reprobated, and then what became of them? A stranger might be astonished, if told all that was said on that matter, or if he believed but a tenth part of it.

In all this part of his discourse, the Captain alluded to Lord Clarendon. But to the Duke of Ormond, whose name with the people at large was

another word for virtue, he seemed to have greater objections. Nothing, however, could be milder than the way in which he put them, or qualified with more charitable provisos. He said it was a misfortune to a man's own mind, to detect errors in other people; especially if they had a high character for virtue. It made one doubt everything. The next thing to doubting such men, was to doubt virtue itself; which, though a weak thing to do, yet mankind were weak, and needed every support to a good opinion of themselves. Lord Clarendon was a proud man; but the Duke of Ormond was prouder: he shewed it less to the vulgar, by reason of an air of tranquillity and decency; but that was because he had a greater contempt for them. The Chancellor flew into passions, because others were of more consequence to him. The Duke was never moved from his lofty self-opinion. Now the Captain had observed, that the prouder a man is, the less reason he has for it. Gaiety—magnificence—a certain air and carriage, were different things. Pride might or might not exhibit these, according to the taste of the individual; but the pride of the heart, that crime by which the angels fell, and which it was an awful presumption for a poor creature, made of clay, to imitate, what could be said for that? What could be said for it by a man who pretended to go down on his knees, with

a daily sense of the wonderful mercies, ay, and of the judgments, of Him in whose sight no man living is justified? Could any but an accursed fool (accursed, I mean, said the Captain, with spiritual blindness) think that he is to go on still in such folly, and that a severe and a terrible judgment will not overtake him? All men are not patient alike. They are too apt to lose sight of the text, which says, that revenge is not theirs. We are told that God sendeth his rain and his sunshine, both on the just and the unjust. That is true; but it is spoken generally, and not of particular judgments. We find it delivered also, "Woe unto you who make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess;" and "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for the judgment that is come upon you." "Observe me, Mr Esher," concluded he, seeing that these texts which I had so often heard, made a startling impression upon me: "I am no fanatic, no level-ler, nor fifth-monarchy man, any more than your father was; but we are all christians; and the more charitable and christian the times, the less does it become us to forget God in our prosperity. The Duke of Ormond is an unjust man, and for his injustice he will suffer; the King is twenty times the good christian that he is; he shews it by his humility. It is agreed upon all hands, that there

is not a better-natured or more loving Prince upon earth. His very faults, if one may so speak, are of a christian sort—an overflow of loving-kindness: and if he is ever severe, it is towards the hard-hearted. Hundreds of valiant officers, disbanded, but of loyal hearts, will not for ever hold out to him their tattered petitions in vain, as they have done to the proud Duke. Candour, even towards his Grace, compels me to say that I have been ill-used by him: you will take as much as you please from the bitterness of what I have said, by reason of that confession: but my wrongs are but as the weight of a feather, compared with those which he has caused others of my brethren in arms to endure: and some of these are nigh maddened with their grievances. If the truth be so kept concealed from the good King, as to lead him to deny redress, I fear much that some heavy noonday calamity, to the amazement of men's minds, will not be long in falling upon the head of his evil counsellor. I have heard frightful things said by men, with faces that would make your heart burn within you to look upon them, so haggard were they, and full of misery. You see," added he, with a smile, "I endure better."

I felt extremely interested by this man. My guardian said little, except to intimate his confidence in the virtues and powers of the Duke of Buckingham, the natural friend of the presbyte-

rians. By degrees, I was led to speak of my prospects at court; and the Captain, after telling me that his old acquaintance, Mr Warmestre, had been good enough to favour him, in confidence, with a general notion of the grounds of them, begged, if he was not taking too great a liberty, that I would indulge him with a particular account of my introduction to the King.

For the first time, I felt disconcerted in mentioning my good fortune. The low, intense voice of the speaker, the air of interest, the polite solemnity with which he waited for me to begin, and some hints which he had thrown out of the disproportion between the powers and the good wishes of the King, together with certain proverbs I was now calling to mind, of haughty nobles and caballing courts, threw me off the gaiety of my confidence. I related the particulars, but not in my usual tone of anticipation, and I found that I had done well.

“ You do well, young gentleman,” said Captain Sandford, “ not to be over secure in any matter that concerns a court. It befits the nicety I have observed in your judgment. Yet I doubt not all will go right, provided you do not make a wrong step in the outset, a thing in which the very nicest judgments may err, without a particular experience. Mr Warmestre tells me, that you have no thought

of reminding the King himself. That would indeed be very unlike what I see of your wit and discernment. I knew a foolish youth, who did so upon such temptation as yours, and who had nothing for his pains but a stare in the face, and an angry ejection by the yeomen. But in knowing that we must have a patron to take us in hand, it is much to know what patron to make choice of. I doubt, from what I learn of the ways of courts, from some who are conversant with such matters, whether it would be so politic to begin with addressing yourself to my Lady Castlemain, as Mr Warmestre tells me you are disposed."

I blushed, and felt vexed with my guardian. Such had been my intention certainly; but I thought he had no right to talk of my affairs without leave; and there was an awkwardness, which I was angry in being forced to acknowledge to myself, in thus having it known to an old republican officer. I wished to be carried gaily in my new career by dint of the feather in my cap, and blushed at being reminded of what my family might have thought of it. A certain tact, however, finer than I thought an old soldier could possess, a disposition to think the best of the lady, and a politic resolution to do so as long as I could, of which my youth and good-nature made very light, enabled me to answer with confidence. I said, that these things,

I conceived, depended upon the turn of a die, and upon something in the character of the gamester into whose hands fortune had put the chance. There was a difference between presumption and trust; and though modesty was a good thing to take everywhere, there was an excess of it which might reasonably make one's very patrons ashamed of us, as unworthy to grace them or do them service; and certainly, from all I could discover, it was not counted the properest thing for a court.

The Captain was pleased to say, that I had hit the matter on the nail. Lady Castlemain, he admitted, would be the best patroness in the world, provided circumstances rendered it agreeable to herself to be so; which he doubted from something a court intelligencer had lately told him. I might easily conceive, he said, that persons at court, especially ladies, may wish to be seen in such matters less at one time than at another; and though he doubted not her Ladyship would prove even a warmer friend than I looked for, there could be no harm to myself, and might be a delicacy towards her, in seeking my introduction at the hands of one of the other sex. The Duke of Buckingham was not only the most powerful of all the noblemen at present about his Majesty, but had a particular value for sprightly geniuses of my cast, and had even been concerned in my first knowledge of the

royal presence. "Only send up word to him," said he, "that you had had a command to wait upon his Majesty, respecting which you would be first humbly pleased to consult his Grace, and he will admit you on the instant. When you are before him, you have nothing to do but to tell your own story; and the plainer you square it with your natural frankness, the better. I would not have you conceal that you come newly out of France (which is a country he has a particular esteem for); nor," said the Captain, laughing, "that you met with one Captain Sandford, a sour fellow and a malcontent, who, though he talks wildly against one Duke, is deeply sensible (and here he resumed his gravity) of the obligations he owes in common with all sufferers for conscience-sake, to another. Nay," concluded he, "now it strikes me you may assuredly do me a service, Mr Esher, by stating that you did meet with such a person, and that this person had lately met with some papers relative to certain estates in Ormond, in the county of Tipperary, in which his Grace appears to be interested; and you may add that if the Captain's suspicions turned out to be correct, he would take the freedom of sending them for his Grace's perusal by the hand of Mr Warmestre, who had dealings with the quarter from which the papers came." I was not to say anything, if I did not please, about what he had remarked of the

Duke of Ormond. It was sufficient if the name of the man reminded me of that of the county. All that he should beg of his Grace the Duke of Buckingham in return, was, a simple acknowledgment of the receipt of the papers through the same channel; for he had no other object in trespassing upon his Grace's attention, than to show him that a man may be grateful on account of good done to his fellow-creatures. If he could see his fellow sufferers righted, from whom the Duke of Ormond withheld their estates, he should be glad; but there were so many to right in these times, and those gentlemen in particular were under such a cloud, owing to the difficulty of disproving certain calumnies arising from former conscientious services (however mistaken) under another master, that he began to despair of redress for them, and to cease to care for it as regarded himself. Adversity had brought him patience; patience had brought him knowledge; and with these three friends, none of the fairest to look at, but the least false imaginable, he should retire into some corner, on the pittance that was left him, and there pray for God's blessings on his Grace and his good endeavours.

The party broke up, and I retired to bed that night, fully resolved to adopt my adviser's recommendation, and not to lose sight of himself. Nothing, in the first instance, would have diverted me

from making my court through the medium of the lady who had so kindly taken it upon herself to thank me when I achieved my exploit of the feather, if it had not been for what the Captain said relative to certain possible delicacies. But the final introduction of himself, together with the ingenuous manner of it, furnished me with a new reason for admitting his view of the case ; and Mr Warmestre congratulated me next day on the double opportunity I now had of making my way in the best manner, and pleasing a very worthy man. But, said he, you must keep his secret. He dare not let his name be guessed at, much less his place of retreat, except to a man like the Duke, able as well as willing to resist his persecutor. After making me give him a promise to that effect, which, he said, might shew me how serious the matter was, he proceeded to inform me that Captain Sandford was one of Cromwell's disbanded officers, a gentleman of fair estate, and adored by his tenants, till my Lord Duke of Ormond thought fit to deprive them of so good a master. The rest I knew from his story, and it was impossible to know it better. He (Mr Warmestre) had made the Captain's acquaintance many years back, when in Ireland ; and it was heart-rending to think that nothing could be done for such men, when the Chancellor, at the time he sanctioned the Duke of Ormond's refusals

to make the least compensation, and did not hesitate to repeat them himself with the most impatient scorn, (as if the lands had not been improved, and the inhabitants too, instead of being cruelly oppressed as under their old tyrants,) was sitting every day in a magnificent room furnished out of the spoils of his very friends the cavaliers, which richer conformists were compelled to offer as bribes to his indulgence. "Worthy Mr Hinton," said my guardian, "persisting in bringing his cause before him the other day, where he sat swelling and glowing with the intemperate ire of his gout, my Lord asked him what face he had to avail himself of mistaken generosities, and to allege those countenances of noble peers in his favour, a list of whom he had brought with him. In truth, they might not have known much of the business; but they abided by the man, because they knew him to be honest, though he had been of a different mind from theirs during the troubles. Mr Hinton, in his christian patience, answered the unworthy taunt by his silence; but he told me that he had much difficulty to refrain from pointing to the gorgeous pictures that hung about the Chancellor's room, and asking him what face his Lordship had to sit among those countenances of noble peers, the owners of which would fain have had them restored to their proper mansions."

As this is the last time I shall call Mr Warmestre my guardian, and as I not long afterwards ceased to behold him again till a very remarkable circumstance took place, which brought him and me and the Captain together, I shall here give a short account of him, brief as my liking of the subject. I had indeed never liked him, but I had seen so little of his person, and knew so much less of his ways, that I used to think I had no right to my disinclination. He had been paymaster, or some such thing, to a part of the commonwealth's forces in Ireland, but professed to live on the remains of a small inheritance. How he lived at home, I mean, in what sort of way, I could not tell; for I never was at his house, and I thought too much of his daughter's presence, to enquire what he did in her absence. He called himself a distant relation. The distance was more certain than the relationship; which was so far off, that in truth I could never discover it. But he persuaded my mother of it; chiefly, I believe, because he was related to a noble family. Now the noblest might have married into ours, and she herself came of a younger branch of one; but she had always thought it a pity that piety and worldly honours did not go together. She consoled herself with texts to another purpose, but the desire was strong; and I believe she would hardly have looked with less horror on the substi-

tution of a papal cross for it, than on the mere taking away of our crest from the backs of the old hall chairs, and the diadem out of which it issued. Mr Warmestre's noble kinsman, though I believe he had nothing to do with him, was his usher to my mother's confidence. He promised to be a very godly and attentive guardian, and for a few weeks behaved as if he was so. He then left me to his friend at Epsom, who turned out a very careless one, for reasons which will be seen by and by; but he was always kind in his manner, and polite to a pitch of deference. His deference increased with my prospects. Even his pious manner was returning, till he saw that I did not value these outward evidences, in which the world had been so much deceived. He then took to a tranquil and observant silence; and under the guise of according with all I did, kept me in a state of pupilage, from which I broke in the manner already mentioned. From that moment, which was close upon the time for our return to England, he took a sort of good-natured leave of guardianship, and as soon as he had seen me in lodgings near Covent Garden, formally gave it up, though I wanted some months of being of age.

His daughter I never could look upon as belonging to him; not because she did not seem to partake of something of his cunning, and had eyes no

wider than his, but because she was otherwise of a much gayer and more cordial nature; or rather, perhaps, because one revolts from finding a resemblance between a person one loves, and another who is not to our taste.

Well, to finish this long chapter, and get into livelier scenes, (for I begin to feel the impatience which I experienced in crossing the channel) Mr Warmestre and I were in England with the spring. We found the cry of primroses in the streets. He took a lodging for me, from which I could see into one of the gardens by the river, and then left me for a few days to look after my little rents in Surrey. I slept that night for the first time in London, my head full of the rattling of coaches and the beauties of the court; and sending for my tailor three hours too soon in the morning, was told, to my delight, that I could not do better than go to the Duke's in the French clothes I had brought with me. The man bowed down to the floor at the name, hardly knowing which to think of most, the Duke, or my costume, or the patterns from which he had leave to copy.

CHAPTER VI.

WITH an anxious but not a doubting heart, full of the delightful ignorance of youth, I took my road to Wallingford House,* breathing the air of London as if it was roses and lilies, and expecting to see the Duke immediately. I was told he would not be stirring these three hours.

I made allowance for fashionable sitters up, having enquired into that and a variety of other matters, and laid in, I thought, a considerable stock of town knowledge—from my tailor. But the rogue turned out to be a very uninformed tailor, who had come that morning after the first customer he had had, of any promise. However, he was right about the clothes. I was the more confident of finding my great man risen, because I learnt that

* Wallingford House, then the residence, as it had been the birth-place, of the Duke of Buckingham, stood on the site of the present Admiralty.

the King had been walking in the Park for above an hour; but his Majesty, it seems, was one of the earliest risers in his kingdom, and his Grace one of the latest. I had not forgotten to give some silver to the porter at Wallingford House; upon which he was kind enough to put on a paternal air, and assure me, that I should be lucky if I found the Duke up when I returned.

The King having left the Park, where I went to catch a sight of him, I amused myself for an hour or two with seeing the guards, and looking at a great clock; and then went into a coffee-house to eat something, my appetite having failed me that morning in the hurry of expectation. I here found some persons talking very freely of the court, and lamenting certain dissensions among his Majesty's favourites. They talked however so grossly, that although startled at first, I gave them no more credit than they deserved. But I heard some things of similar import, whispered in a gruff voice by a thick-set jolly-looking personage, who sat near me, regaling himself with a tankard and chicken. There was much lamentation in what he said, but no coarseness. He spoke even in high terms of Lady Castlemain, whom he called his "dear beauty," adding a singular remark, that "her nose was out of joint." "But lord!" continued he, "to see how the courtiers flock about Miss Stewart, like

flies round a honey pot : as if my sweet Castlemain was no longer worth looking at; and she to be so worshipped as I have seen her !” He then dropped his voice, looking at the same time about him ; and I, finding he did not wish to be heard, moved farther off.

I now made up my mind to a resolution, for which courtiers in ordinary would have pronounced me mad ; nor, indeed, did I see the reasonableness of it myself, as far as the court was concerned. But the instinct turned out to be judicious. I resolved to pay my first respects to Lady Castlemain herself. It was Miss Stewart’s plume that I had picked up ; but it was her Ladyship who thanked me : she was now in disgrace, and I thought it a gallant thing to stand by her, and take my chance in that company. In the midst of this generosity of purpose, I could not help feeling a secret conviction, that it was impossible so much beauty and merit should have so sudden a downfall. I pictured to myself woman triumphing, in her shape, over the generous King, granting that Miss Stewart had her merits also ; and, at all events, I could still see the Duke of Buckingham, whether it was politic or not to begin with the lady. In fine, was she not the divine Parysatis ?

I accordingly presented myself at the door of her apartments in Whitehall, to the astonishment of an

usher in gold lace, who asked me if I had had her Ladyship's commands to wait on her. I said, no. "Then how," resumed he—I saw he was going to be the ruin of himself whenever he should open the door to me in future, and therefore saved him by a new astonishment; observing, that I had had his Majesty's command to wait on him at that time, under circumstances, which, though all but an entire stranger to her Ladyship, I thought it my duty to call to her mind. The poor man hereupon bowed to me, as if he would have made me an offering of his head, and went in to announce I know not what; for in his emotion he had forgotten to ask my name.

After a delay which began to distress me, I was admitted. The divinity was seated amidst a world of flowers and splendours, a lute and a bunch of yellow plumes being on the table before her, and another young lady by her side at work. The splendours dazzled me not. I had been too conversant with romances for that. But I was struck with the mingled beauty and exaltation in the countenance of my heroine, and for the moment fairly stood dumb. The colour seemed to have risen in her cheeks, heightening their natural roses; and her eyes shone haughtily above them. "I begin to fear I have been very presumptuous, madam,"

said I, "in thus giving way even to the force of circumstances; but—"

I was here going to make a pretty finish to my exordium, when the young lady, putting her handkerchief to her mouth, and rising up, whispered something in passing to her Ladyship; and so went behind her out of the room. The expression of her countenance instantly changed to an open and most lively smile, as if with difficulty refraining from laughter. She said she wondered to see me come in, having been led to expect a message from the Queen, and not knowing by whom it could have been sent, "but if I mistake not," said she, "I see Mr Esher, whom his Majesty, when at Durdans last autumn, qualified by the style and title of Knight of the Lady's Falcon?"

"The more I consider your goodness, madam," said I, "in thus allowing me to present myself before you, and the smallness of the occasion that gave rise to his Majesty's condescension (of which perhaps I have been too presumptuously sensible,) the more I feel as if I ought to trespass upon it no longer; yet I may be indulged with saying, that it is no sordid thought which has led me into this freedom, much less the imagination of any claim upon his Majesty's kindness."

I was going to add something, but she began

to speak, which made me pause. "Go on," said she, "pray; and fear not to speak as you think."

"I was about to add, madam, that I had felt an impulse, and obeyed it; but having done so, and enjoyed the good fortune of again seeing the face I had never forgotten, in health and happiness, I begin to suspect myself for one who is overpaid, and would fain show that I am capable of making amends for an unwarrantable intrusion by a thankful retreat."

"Not so," returned her Ladyship; "methinks you very ably sustain the good opinion conceived of you, in your outset of the feather. You do well to give up a claim, whatsoever it be, and not to expect too much from us; but a feather, a lady's feather (do not be afraid of the word) may be a weightier matter with some than you reckon; and I would not have you forego reminding the King of it."

Lady Castlemain said this with an air of pique, which however gave way as she spoke. I guessed the cause, from what I had heard in the coffee-house, and could not but think it an extreme kindness in her to be willing to forward my views, at the hazard of seeing them turned into a new compliment to her rival. I could not refrain from saying, that I had hitherto thought the value of a feather, even when a lady's, depended upon the

greater or less admiration caused in us by the owner ; that I did not presume to say, what was or was not the amount of it on that score in the present instance, not having remembered the lady to whom it belonged (I suppose it was the court air that led me into this little fib) but that I could not but acknowledge, now that I was permitted to think myself excused in combining the two recollections, that a feather had become united in my thoughts with the condescension of my Sovereign, and the sweetest voice it had been my fortune to hear.

“ ’Tis prettily said,” observed her Ladyship; “ but is it not a little faithless ? ” It surprised me to hear her say this. “ And how is it, Mr Esher,” continued she, “ that you have not waited on his Grace of Buckingham this morning, for surely you have not been admitted at Wallingford House at this time of day ? ”

I answered, with amazement in my looks, that my gratitude had impelled me to wait on her Ladyship first. “ ’Tis gallantly done,” said she, “ and I thank you ; but if I am not taxing Mr Esher’s good opinion of me too severely, will he be so good as to instruct me how it happened, that he altered his determination with respect to the Duke ; because I have been credibly informed by the little winged gossip, known by the name of the little bird, who is a mighty breeder in courts, that his

purpose to wait on my Lady Castlemain first, had been given up."

The astonishment created in me by this news, and the mixture of kindness and of childish banter in her Ladyship's style, disconcerted me so much, that I had need of all my address to enable me to reply. I felt that nothing but the truth could supply it. To pretend too much gratitude for the thanks I had received at Durdans, would have been to make myself of too much importance. Nevertheless, the temptation was irresistible to shew how I could forego the politic side for the generous; and yet in implying the possibility of her being under a cloud, I was not to impress the sense of it too strongly. I did not go through all these reflections at the time, but it is astonishing of what a number of little critical judgments the least conscious of our deliberations is made up. Besides, the better instincts of youth anticipate the last wisdom we can come to. I was naturally quick of discernment. I saw that the beauty before me was proud and vehement, but I thought her generous, and I resolved to move the best feelings of her nature, by the dangerous compliment of proving to her that I thought her above the others. I therefore gave her to understand, in as delicate a manner as I could, what had really led me to pay her my respects before I had been to the Duke. I spoke of my youth, and my admiration of the sex,

and my romances, to excuse the zeal with which I had turned the silly talk of a coffee-house into a ground for my presumption; and I concluded with saying, that I was nevertheless extremely in earnest, and that as my first object in desiring an admittance at court was to admire the wit and graces it contained, so there was nothing I was not prepared to hazard, even the chance of being thought as childish as I was inexperienced, for the pleasure of shewing a generous woman, that I meant well. "And I use the word woman," said I, "in preference to a more courtly term, because I feel that nothing will or ought to get me out of the dilemma in which I find myself, but the whole truth of my nature; and an appeal to those qualities of the sex, which nature herself has been the first to ennoble."

The Countess arose, and advancing in the most striking and cordial manner, with all her beauties upon her, extended me her hand. "We are friends, Mr Esher," said she, "from this moment. I will act towards you as a friend; I will even complain to you, if my lot forces me to do so; and especially if it renders me unable to serve you. But that it shall not do. Leave, for the present, your design of addressing yourself to the Duke of Buckingham, which indeed might not be so well without other means of getting admittance to him than you have at present; but in the meanwhile, omit not to

send me intelligence, from time to time, of your welfare—nay, come with it, if that is what you would request ; but you must come to my house at Chelsea, not here, where I am on duty upon the Queen. I do not need reminding, but I wish you to be assured that I do not ; and it shall go hard with us both, if all does not end well ; ay, and in the teeth of some little-minded people, whose teeth, to say the truth of them, are the best things they have to show for their wit. So now,” concluded she, changing colour as she spoke, “go forth like a proper knight, with a lady’s benison ; and shortly I will let you know how we speed.”

In my quality of knight, I ventured to kiss her hand ; which, as I was going to take it, she very frankly put up against my lips for that purpose. The next minute I found myself outside Whitehall, stumbling among the sedan chairs. I turned into the park to recollect myself.

How my fair patroness had become acquainted with my intention respecting the Duke, I could not conceive. I concluded that the intelligence must have come from Mr Warmestre, but how, or though what channel, it was impossible to imagine. That quiet person, though I had long doubted him, had no court acquaintances that I knew of. His intimates lay in another quarter, among the old puritans and Commonwealth officers, and he had

scarcely left me since our coming to London ; but to return into the country. However, the escape of this secret had turned out so luckily, that I soon forgot to think of the mode of it. But did the Duke then know of my coming also ? I was either a mighty person all of a sudden, or courts had intelligencers of a very extraordinary description. At all events, though I resolved to make my way to the Duke on the poor Colonel's account, I was rejoiced to find that I had no reason to seek him directly on my own ; and I blessed my stars a thousand times, that I had been saved from the awkwardness of going to him for no better reason. The King's name had helped me to an interview with Lady Castlemain. It might have got me into the presence of the Duke, but it seemed I should still have been wanting. Neither the Countess nor myself was aware, what a talisman I possessed for his attention in the obscure name of Sandford.

Of some kind of admittance at court, I now felt secure. If not admitted there at once, or even at all, I had gained a more than courtly acquaintance, for whose patronage alone, though I did not well see what it could do for me, I was prepared to complete the story of my disinterestedness, and die a poor gentleman. There were great wits no richer than myself, who would not disdain my friendship, especially with this recommendation.

The intimacy of one would introduce me to that of another ; and I resolved to know and relish them all round. I pursued my way up the Mall, making verses on the Countess, and considering whether I should model them upon those on Lady Carlisle's chamber, beginning

“ They taste of death that do at heav'n arrive,
But we this paradise approach alive ;”

or whether, I should assume the more triumphant tone of the verses on the Queen, with an eye to those rustical admirations, to which I now began to think myself entitled to be a little unfaithful :

“ The lark, that shuns on lofty boughs to build
His humble nest, lies silent in the field ;
But if (the promise of a cloudless day)
Aurora smiling bids her rise and play,
Then strait she shows 'twas not for want of voice,
Or power to climb, she made so low a choice :
Singing she mounts ; her airy wings are stretched
Tow'rds heav'n, as if from heaven her note she fetched.

So we, retiring from the busy throng,
Use to restrain the ambition of our song ;
But since the light which now informs our age,
Breaks from the court, indulgent to her rage,
Thither my muse, like bold Prometheus, flies
To light her torch at Gloriana's eyes.”

I was repeating the last glorious line in a high manner to myself, when I observed the people before me taking off their hats ; and in a moment I

found the King coming, leading the Queen by the hand, and followed by her court. He had been playing at tennis in the Mall; and her Majesty had come to see him. The people bowed and stood uncovered on all sides in the most respectful manner. I heard them congratulating each other on the harmony in which their Majesties lived, and the falsehood of certain reports. A single spectacle of this kind was enough to make us think the Sovereign the most amiable man in the world. A number of little dogs scampered about before him, and the Maids of Honor came behind. I recognised Miss Stewart with her beautiful shape and little Roman nose. It was said that the countenance of this lady had been put for that of Britannia on the new coin; but I did not see the likeness. The sight of his Majesty thus tender to the Queen made me see it still less. I thought the King looked at me as he passed, but was resolved to be generous, and gave him no intimation that I was the "illustrious person who intercepted the lady's feather." I liked to have a King in my debt; and hugged myself on the advantage I possessed over those about me, in thinking where I had been that morning.

Following the court back, I dined at a tavern, in order to accustom myself to the ways of the town, and then wandered till I came to a book-shop. The

bookseller seeing the turn of my inquiries, delighted me by producing the best pieces he had on sale; Suckling's, Waller's, Denham's and others. He also showed me a great book called Fuller's Worthies of England, of which I conceived a mean opinion, upon finding that the author had only mentioned one of my ancestors, and then written *Asher* for *Esher*. Butler's Hudibras, a new poem lately come out, gave me some very uncomfortable sensations, between the love it exhibited for loyalty, and the bitter and vulgar contempt showered on opinions which I had been taught to respect. I wished if possible to unite the two, or at least not to see reverend mistakes treated so irreverently, and I was glad to find that others had been perplexed as well as myself. The wit and the rhymes however made me laugh heartily; and I longed to see the author, while I was glad to think the rest of his poem obscure and unreadable. The bookseller told me, that the King carried it about in his pocket; and that the author expected some great place at court; but, said he, there are so many idle tales, and so many expectors, that one never knows what to believe. He then related a number of wild stories of Sedley, Lord Buckhurst, and others; observing, that he should not have credited a tenth part of them but for certain trials, in which those persons of wit and honour had been brought

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forward. "But lord!" said he, "their blood is so pampered with wine and good living, that no marvel it boils over. Youth will be youth. There was wild blood in the time of Oliver. I could show you, sir, a great lady who comes to my poor shop, that they say was Oliver's mistress; and she looks sly enough for it; only they were serious-sly in those days, and now they are sly and merry." He concluded with instructing me on the subject of the plays in vogue; and shewed me a copy of verses addressed by Mr Dryden to the Countess of Castlemain on her protection of his first play, the 'Wild Gallant.' "It was wild enough," he said, "yet it did not succeed. There, sir, you see, he compares her Ladyship to Cato; so we cannot be as bad as some pretend." (All this sounded very oddly in my ears.)

"Once Cato's virtue did the Gods oppose :
While they the victor, we the vanquish'd choose ;
But you have done what Cato could not do,
To choose the vanquished and restore him too.
Some poets empty fame and praise despise,
Fame is the trumpet, but your smile the prize.
You sit above, and see vain men below
Contend, for what you only can bestow ;
But these great actions others do by chance
Are, like your beauty, your inheritance :
So great a soul, such sweetness joined in one,
Could only spring from noble Grandison."

And then the poet went on about heaven, and goodness, and her Ladyship's "guarding her own and others' innocence," all which, after I had been in town some days longer, I reconciled to some awkward fancies, by the difference existing between real life and romance, and the truth which nevertheless might exist in both. But already I began to make great progress. The bookseller told me, that Sir Charles Sedley had been reported the other day to have killed a man in the Cock-pit; "when lo, and behold, sir," says he, "he comes the minute afterwards into my shop, as innocent as the babe unborn, having only been drunk and kicked the man; and so he brings me this pastoral to send to the printer's." I read the pastoral, which was in the most innocent style of the lambs and shepherds. The following is a taste of it:—

"Bright Galatea, in whose matchless face,
Sat rural innocence with heavenly grace;
In whose no less inimitable mind,
With equal light e'en distant virtues shin'd;
Chaste without pride, and charming without art,
Honour the tyrant of her tender heart;
Fair goddess of these fields who for our sports,
Though she might well become, neglected courts,
Beloved of all, and loving me alone,
Is from my sight, I fear, for ever gone."

So saying, he goes out, and kicks a man in a cock-pit.

I went that evening to the theatre, and saw a play (I forget its name) which transported me by its connection with the romances. It restored me to all my confidence, if not in the actual virtues, yet in the possible; and youth is very liberal at an absolution. But what astonished me was the gravity with which the audience would attend to the highest flights of virtue, and then between the acts laugh, and roar, and quarrel, and gather about women in masks, in a way as different from the decorums to which I had been accustomed in the French theatre, as a court from a drunken mob. In the gallery all was noise and uproar; at the sides of the pit were the bullies and dear hearts, quarrelling and making love; and on all sides were females in the vizards newly come up, which completely disguised their faces, and enabled them to hear and suffer what they pleased. Coming out of the house, some great lady, whose beautiful throat and chest I had been admiring, accosted me, "mistaking" me for somebody else. I explained with the greatest respect; she apologised with the deepest gravity, and curtsied off in a style that I should have taken for burlesque a month afterwards.

The next night I saw the 'Aglaura,' of my old friend Suckling, and the night following the 'Parson's Wedding,' a very astounding piece of viva-

city, all performed by women, and written by Mr Killigrew, groom of his Majesty's bed-chamber. I was studying hard. The night after was presented the 'Rival Ladies,' a piece by Mr Dryden, at which I had the pleasure of seeing the King and his court. Lady Castlemain sat behind the Queen with Miss Stewart and other ladies. It was thought that the rivalries among them were pointed at in the play. Besides the allusions in the story, there was a Mask, in which Cupid descended and accused Proserpine of stretching her conquests too far, and bringing war into the peace of heaven:

" Beauties, beware ! Venus will never bear
Another Venus shining in her sphere."

Some gentlemen near me, who had been criticising the piece, looked up at these passages ; and I thought Venus bore herself proudly, as if to say the poet was right.

I led this life for a week, till I should see Mr Warmestre. One night, the play being very late on account of some dances and new machines, I did not arrive at my lodgings till my sober host and his wife had gone to bed. I did not choose to knock them up, as she was not only in delicate health, but preparing to gift him with another little goldsmith. She was subject also to frights occasioned by ruffling gallants in the street.

and the noises they made. Not long since they had wrenched the knocker off his door, and pulled down his sign of the Golden Pen. I had no money in my pocket; and by one of those fits of want of reflection which sometimes take possession of us, added to the awkwardness arising from inexperience, I never thought of going to some open lodging-house, and sending to my host in the morning. I therefore made up my mind to parade the town all night. I sought every corner of it, both for diversity's sake, and to keep off the cold, which long before morning began to make me wish myself housed. At one time I was in Clerkenwell, near the Duke of Newcastle's; then amid the shops on London bridge; then at Whitehall again, and then upon the fields by St Giles's. I rescued one woman from some disturbance, who laughed at me for my pains; and another, who thanked me with tears in her eyes. Towards midnight I was much amused and refreshed by seeing a masquerade come out of the Duke of Buckingham's; and I found a variety of objects to entertain me for some hours before, in the immense mass of houses constituting Whitehall, and containing lords and ladies, cooks, gamblers, coffee-houses, and rooks and rufflers of all sorts. But the pleasantest sight was a great blacksmith's shop, roaring with its early fire. One set of gentry I followed up the Strand.

They went along, knocking at doors, looking into sedans, frightening women, and performing a variety of other urbanities, till they came to York House,* where they formed into a line of march, and to the trampling of their feet, began singing a popular invective.

“ When Queen Dido landed, she bought as much ground,
As the *Hyde* of a lusty fat bull would surround ;
But when the said *Hyde* was cut into thongs,
A city and kingdom to *Hyde* belongs ;
So here in court, country, and church, far and wide,
There’s nought to be seen but *Hyde ! Hyde ! Hyde !*”

The repetition of the Chancellor’s name had really a frightful sound. The noise of the feet and the voices together sounded as if the singers constituted a larger body than they were ; and stouter nerves than his Lordship’s, then suffering severely under the gout, might have heard in this drunken insult an appalling anticipation. The roysterers passed on into silence ; and the great house was left to itself, looking stately and sullen.

On going home next night to my lodgings, I found Mr Warmestre returned from the country. He expressed great surprise on my telling him, that I had not been to the Duke’s. I related where I had been, and the encouragement given me ; upon

* Where Clarendon then lived.

which he was pleased to say, that I could not err but to my profit; and that in securing Lady Castlemain, I had got one of the rivals on my side. However, said he, you must not lose the other. Observing me little bent on that policy, he added "You must not, Mr Esher, for humanity's sake, and I am sure you will not." I asked what humanity had to do with paying my court to a reigning beauty. He smiled and said, "Nothing with that; but here is the poor Captain,—Captain Sandford has followed us from France, having been driven away a few hours after our departure by the contrivances of this unchristian Duke of Ormond. He is nigh starving with the suddenness of the expense, besides being in new peril from the Duke, whom poverty now forces him to adventure close upon, in his own quarters. He is therefore compelled to be earnest upon a matter, which before was comparatively indifferent; and it is of the utmost consequence to the poor gentleman that the Duke should be made acquainted with the power he has to serve him, even if in so small a matter as the affair of the district of Ormond. Nothing need be said of the Duke of Ormond, the poor man being so affected as to be willing to forget his personal grievance, and it being as well on all sides at present, that nothing should look like a trespass upon his Grace's attention. But the Duke was very

generous. I knew not to what extent I might assist in serving the Captain; and he was sure the pleasure of this consideration would alone induce me not to give up my first intention."

"But what was I to say to Lady Castlemain?"

"Why," returned Mr Warmestre, "that would seem a delicate point; but truly your open and generous conduct succeeds in a manner so different from what vulgar politicians would guess, and her Ladyship appears to be so well qualified to understand it, that I do not see how you could do anything better, even to please her."

"But the secret? I cannot disclose the Captain's name?"

"No: but you may say, that the name *is* a secret; that you have been begged to keep it even from the ladies; and (concluded he, with a gayer smile than I had yet seen him venture upon) the ladies will not like you the less for that; they will see how you could keep a secret of their own."

"'Tis the very thing which I feel I must do," said I, "if I do anything." I rallied my quondam guardian on the influence which the town air had on his gravity; and he fell in with my gaiety, to an extent not quite agreeable. He said, honest men grew more indulgent to the times every day. I suspect, thought I, you are not quite so honest as the poor Captain and I have fancied. However, I de-

terminated to go to the Duke instantly, and to be very candid about it to Lady Castlemain. And I told him so.

“But,” said I, “Mr Warmestre, pr’ythee how happened it that the court are already made partakers of my own secret? The keeping of it was not very necessary; but you see the mischief it might have done.”

“It has done nothing but good,” replied the puritan, “for aught that I see, now that no detriment is to ensue to my poor friend. You have got into the graces of a noble lady: even chance and rashness fight for you; and as to your secret, which however need surely be no more a secret than the fine weather, I do confess it may have escaped me in the buoyancy of my heart, seeing the introduction you had obtained to the greatest man in England, and the account to which I knew your manners would turn it. In a word, Mr Esher,” concluded he, taking up his hat, and observing that he had promised to restore the Captain’s hopes in case I behaved as he expected me,—“you shall hear, the next time we meet, how it got to her Ladyship’s ears; for I must now stop in town till I see the end of your visit to his Grace of Buckingham; and I too am not without a fair friend at court.”

With these words my old acquaintance slipped out; leaving me to wonder, whether the jumping

of our wits with regard to the secret, was or was not to my worship's honour. Feeling right however on that point, he partook of the credit of it; and I endeavoured to think I had done him wrong both in this and my former suspicions. Every hour I was learning something new; and my experiences were of such a nature, that if I still thought highly of myself and my new friends, I was bound not to leave out one who encouraged me in my charities.

CHAPTER VII.

I TOOK care, this time, not to be too soon for his Grace of Buckingham. The porter, as soon as he saw my face, put on his former smile, and said, "Well, young gentleman, you have come again, eh? Well, what can we do for you? Not much, methinks, since you have come again no sooner. All in good time, eh?" His familiarity offended me; I assumed all the awfulness of the powers enjoined me by the King; and to show that I had grown older since last week, bade him send the message to the Duke's gentleman. The Duke's gentleman came bowing into the room into which I was shown; but he was so much of the real gentleman, that I felt ashamed at deriving dignity from his ignorance. However, I had learnt enough not to say what I felt. I proceeded by my manner to restore him gently to his superiority without weakening my right of admittance. He concluded, no

doubt, that the King, in his careless way, had sent a message by some unofficial person; so resuming the rank I gave him, but not without a sort of wondering respect, he left me to tell his master. In a minute I was requested to follow him.

I passed through a number of people who rose as I went by, then entered a suite of rooms, at the end of which was a sound of guitars and of voices concluding a duet. It was one I had taken a part in, twenty times, at Madame Kerneguy's. The voices ceased, but a strain of violins followed, which I recognised for a march of Lulli's; so that I seemed to approach the Duke in music. We now passed through a second multitude of people; then through another anti-room, then through the music room, the loudness of which opened upon us very grandly; and finally, two doors near together being successively opened and shut, which suddenly threw the music at a distance, and left only a listening quiet, I found myself in the presence of a man with a flushed but noble aspect, who stood in a morning gown, dipping his face into a great basket of flowers, as if to cool himself with the dew. He uttered a sort of petulant sigh, as if to say it was of no use. "Take 'em away, Hatton," said he, "they are ill for a morning head. I have risen betimes to attend on my liege lord, and thus is my virtue rewarded. But the billet, take not the billet,

thou knave. And these lute-strings,—take them away. They will never do. I might as well pinch the cat that begot them. Tell Peter, if he can't procure me better without delay, I must send a man post over the water, or steal some of Arran. Here's a duet waiting to be sung, for which the universe ought to stop."

I said that if I might presume to offer them to his Grace, I had brought some excellent lute-strings newly with me from Paris, which were much at his Grace's service.

"Says't thou so, Sir Unknown," cried the Duke; "then my Grace will generously accept the moiety. But what of the King? I call not thy face to mind among the juvenals of the presence. And so the strings are excellent are they! What, of the right manufacture; made by—who is he called, without whom the cherubim can do nothing?"

St Ange, I presumed, his Grace meant. I had them from him myself, out of the same box that supplied Mademoiselle La Valiere.

"Ho! ho! thou art choice," said the Duke; "and where are they? and how soon am I to have them?"

"Suddenly, if his Grace so pleased. They were hard by, at my lodgings in Covent Garden."

"Thy lodgings in Covent Garden? and what is thy name, young gentleman? Thy breeding is

undoubted, thus letting the affairs of the kingdom wait for a song. But pr'ythee,—is it true, what they tell me in the last advices from the ambassador, that the French King goes to visit Madame La Valiere with drum and trumpet?"

I told the Duke that I had seen him. "He is a great prince," said he, "and does things with a lustre:

'Before him goeth the loud minstrelsie.'

Well done, Cambuscan. And so thou playest the lute? and can'st string it, and put it in tune, eh? Do they still tune as they used at Paris?"

I here related what I knew of the musical modes in that city, and it was settled by the Duke I should return with all speed, and put the strings on the lute myself and tune it.

"And now, Mr—hum,—ha,"—said his Grace, putting on an air of business, and looking at me a little sternly,—“what says the King? and pray let me know his messenger.”

I told him my name was Esher; then seeing that I had better not lose any time, nor suffer him to expect more than I could help, I plunged into my affairs at once, by saying, that I should not have ventured to trouble his Grace without having had an excuse for so doing furnished me by the King himself, though, unfortunately, on no greater

point than my own concernments; that his Grace, though it was not to be expected he should be able to call it to mind without help, had been pleased on the occasion alluded to, to say something calculated to strengthen his Majesty's graciousness towards me; that nevertheless, great as was my desire to avail myself of the royal goodness, I should hardly have been bold enough to think further of it, had it not been for the extreme admiration I entertained for the wit and accomplishments that were only to be found in the circle of his Majesty and his friends; that possessing a gentleman's independence, though a small one, and far inferior to what an ancient family might have handed down, I could with pleasure, if a footing were permitted me, waive all the ordinary ends that people looked for in such matters of advancement, it being indeed a proud thing to have occasion of shewing one's preference of great qualities to sordid interests; and finally, after all, that his Grace would not perhaps have been subject to my intrusion, were it not that I looked to his charity for pardoning on another person's account what I had no pretensions to on my own, having met at Paris with a poor man, one Captain Sandford, who had some papers relative to an estate in the district of Ormond, which—

I had delivered myself nearly in the above words,

so that I had not been very long in saying a pretty good deal; but the Duke was getting impatient, and about to ask questions, when he suddenly stopped at the name of Sandford, and as suddenly made me repeat it. He then looked hard at me,—right in the eyes,—“Papers relative to an estate in the district of Ormond. I know of such a thing, and am concerned in its issue. Do you know nothing further of it yourself?” He came nearly close up to me, and spoke low.

I said I knew nothing further. The poor man would be very glad to find the Duke thought anything of his papers: respecting which, any intimation with which his Grace might be pleased to favour me, would be transmitted through the hands of my late guardian, Mr Warmestre.

The Duke looked at me again, making me repeat this second name; and there was an expression of doubt in his face, which I thought strange.

“And this Captain—what is it?—Sandford—I suppose he thinks a mighty thing of his having papers that concern a Duke, and talks of this to everybody?”

I said no; that I judged very differently both from the gentleman’s manners, and the injunction of secrecy laid upon myself.

“Which, perhaps, you care no more for,” interrupted the Duke, “than they say I do?”

I knew not what to think of this incontinent speech. I felt a little indignant at the supposition, yet doubted whether I ought, seeing the Duke own himself charged with such an offence. “Pardon me, my lord,” said I, “if there is anything upon earth, which”—I stopped, for I was going to imply a vice on his Grace’s part, when he changed the expression of his countenance in a moment, and tapping me on the shoulder, he observed in a very quiet way, that I had interested him in what I had said of my wishes, which he complimented as something that had an agreeable taste of romance; and then he made me tell him how the King had given rise to them. In short, I related to him all that I had felt and done; how I had cherished the hope, and how I had gone to France to render myself a little worthier of it.

His Grace broke out in a rapture, very different from what I had looked for, when I first entered upon my affairs. He ended with calling for his valet, and said, in laughing haste,—“Come along—my little friend, (by the bye, I was as tall as he)—we lose time—I was going to the King when you entered, and you shall go with me. The Majesty of England shall be entertained with a new spec-

tacle—none the worse for the player. *O rara juventus!* a courtier disinterested! a page warring against a salary. “I had rather be a door-keeper, eh, in the house of”—and then his Grace made a profane application of scripture, which would have turned poor Saunders into a shaken reed.

The coach was ready in an instant, and my grand self found myself seated with his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, Master of his Majesty’s Horse, in a coach and four, that seemed to tear up the road for very scorn and superiority. We stopped almost as speedily at the door on the left hand of the Banqueting House; and proceeding through several ante-rooms, the inmates of which hardly knew which to honour most, the Duke or myself, his Grace spoke a word to another nobleman in a star and garter, and then took me into the King’s closet. Nobody was there. He applied his lips to a place in the corner of the room, which I concluded to be the mouth of a trumpet, and said, gently, “Sten-nison, come to wait on his Majesty.”

“ See where she sits,
Like day retired into another world,”

said the Duke, looking at the same time into the garden. I looked too, but saw nobody, which made this pleasant minister laugh. “Always *rara ju-*

ventus?” cried he, “and now the *purpureum lumen* is on his cheeks. When was it there last?”

Perceiving me not well knowing how to look, between his Grace’s banter and the expectation of again being in the royal presence, the Duke was proceeding to give me encouragement, when we heard steps hastily descending. It was the King. The Duke made a profound reverence. I knelt, and I thought his Majesty knew me, but he did not. “I brought,” said the Duke, “your Majesty yesterday a strawberry as big as my fist: the day before I had the honour of dismaying you with Queen Elizabeth’s shoes; but to day my curiosity exceeds all; for I present to your Majesty, Mr Esher, sole representative of the most ancient family of the Eshers, who, though he had the happiness of saving Miss Stewart’s feather from contamination, and received a most gracious direction to present himself at court thereupon, is not only bashful withal, but disinterested,—I mean Exchequer-wards; for none, as he says, can be disinterested who seek the wit and graces of your Majesty’s presence:—you see, Sir, how his countenance is relieved by this explanation, Mr Esher himself being a wit, dealing in a most instinctive phraseology of courtliness, and putting us on our defence with pointed periods. But his great marvel is, that he is peremptory for having his throat cut

by half your Majesty's acquaintance, for he is anxious to be distinguished from all money-loving suitors, being enamoured solely of your Majesty's wit and great qualities; and so, if his gracious monarch does not permit him to die in his service for nothing, he will break his heart; and there will be an end of the ancient and most decayed family of the Eshers."

At the close of this extraordinary speech, I hardly knew where I was; but the King restored me by speaking in the kindest manner, and giving me his hand to kiss. He said he recollected the circumstance mentioned by the Duke: he acknowledged the right I had to present myself before him, in consideration of the services I had done a fair lady, and was pleased with the delicacy of my behaviour in waiving my right to claims, with which so many inconsiderate persons thought themselves entitled to exhaust him and his exchequer, on grounds very far from admitted.

I here took the opportunity of expressing my deep sense of his Majesty's indulgence, and of repeating the assurances of my disinterestedness. I said I did not enlarge upon the latter point, because it would be pretending a right to occupy his Majesty's attention, as well as doing an injustice to my own truth, and the conviction he had been pleased to express of it; and I added, that I could only pique

myself upon the waiving so poor an acknowledgment as any services of mine could have been worth, by the consideration that every little became of importance when there were so many petitioners for his Majesty's favour, and that in loyalty as in love, the smallest evidence of good-will was not despised by the noble.

The King smiled, and said that as I spoke so well, I should thank Miss Stewart herself for the favour she had brought upon me, for he was determined something should be done without delay, and the Duke of Buckingham, who had seconded her so well, would see to it. "Will you not, George?" added he, turning to his Master of the Horse: "you will speak to my people, the rogues, and insist upon it; and the first convenient opportunity—you understand me—instruct Mr Esher where to pay his compliments. There:—I am bent on it; so no more. The young man—setting our dignity aside—must be paid his salary, if only to give a lesson to the importunity of unhandsome suitors: and so farewell, for I have some very pressing business on hand, which will admit not of delay."

"The business then on which I was sent for," said the Duke, "may wait, peradventure, till your Majesty is more at leisure."

The King blushed a little, as he said "Odsfish! I recollect,—but it must, it must. So God bless you,

my Lord Duke; and you too, Mr *Fisher*," patting me good-naturedly on the head. And in a moment we heard him ascending the stairs in haste.

" So up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And op'd the chamber door,"

hummed the Duke, as he led the way out. " You have a gracious Prince, Mr Esher, and are justly charmed with him. Government with him goes as easily as a tune; and so now for the lute-strings."

I flew, with my heart in my mouth, to Covent Garden, brought away the strings, took them to Wallingford House, new strung the lute, and put it in the last modish condition. The Duke would have me play with him. I played and sang, and repeated, at his request, the *Belle Matineuse*, which he made me write down, that he might give it Miss Stewart. The King, he said, would like it. I noticed, that he never mentioned Lady Castlemain, though she was his cousin. I learnt afterwards that they were in open enmity. It was lucky that I was already courtier enough to content myself with answering questions, otherwise his Grace might have taken it into his head to forget me.

For a week or ten days I underwent a torrent of friendship at the Duke of Buckingham's. He would call his kindness by no less a name; and I began to be considered so great a man, that the good fortune seemed natural. In the course of

that time I had an appointment, of which I shall speak presently; and by the end of it I was nearly killed with his Grace's hours. The people at my lodgings, when I took leave of them, looked as if I was going to destruction: and as to Mr Warmestre, he looked and bowed, as if I was going to heaven. I could not lift him out of the profundity of his admiration. I dined with the Duke, supped, breakfasted, heard all sorts of things about every body, half of which I believed; and by the time I was nearly killed, had commenced life, and was reckoned a made man.

One day we waited dinner for him till *next* day! Happening to look out of window, he left the house to follow a lady, just as the table was dressed, at nine o'clock, (the time when other people went to their suppers,) and he did not return till nine the next morning, when he dined for the novelty's sake, the spit having been kept in motion the whole time with fresh appliances. I had gone to sleep with a lute at my head, and he woke me in the language of Brutus to the little boy:—

“ O murd'rous slumber!

Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy
That plays the music?”

I did not quite relish this designation. I thought myself so beholden to him, that he ought not, for his own sake, to rate me so low; but I had observed

that he bantered everybody in a similar way, and that he had not the art of making himself as agreeable as he was obliging. Self-love may be blind, inasmuch as it has no eyes for looking in a glass; but it feels, at every pore of its skin, whatever comes in contact with it. The Duke had had too much pleasure, power, and riches, to have any instinct but for self-indulgence, and he could not seem even to worship you, but you found it was for a purpose of his own. Very little things are often great evidences of character. Buckingham was so apt to forget everything but himself, that he would hum an air at dinner as he helped himself to the salt; and the least whim that came into his brain was sufficient to make him despatch a stranger from his table, or an old servant out of his bed: yet he could forget even his interest, if the pleasure of the moment was concerned in it. It was with the greatest difficulty he could keep a secret that concerned people's lives. I should say his own, but that he felt secure upon this head, for reasons which will be seen hereafter. The consequence was, that after I had lived in his house a week, had rioted in his luxuries, sincerely laughed at his jokes, and thought myself, above all, obliged by him in the highest degree, I came away surfeited as much with him as with his Burgundy, and quarrelling with myself for not liking him better.

The day on which I took possession of my apartments at Whitehall, and while I was cheating the devil by expatiating on the obligations I owed his Grace, instead of the sense entertained of them, he led the discourse for the first time to the Ormond papers. I had brought them from the Captain through Mr Warmestre's hands, and was now to be the channel of a regular correspondence. "And nobody is to know of this mighty secret, still, eh, Esher?" said the Duke; "the Captain will not let you off?" I said that it was a deliverance I should never think of requesting: neither did I care about it. "Well," returned he, "oblige his humour as you will: it is worthy of a most ancient and quiet gentleman." His Grace had often hinted to me, that there was more in those papers than I fancied. In short, the secret was dying to escape him, but something prevented it. I little thought to what a test his wine had put me; and that a halter was hardly safer to meddle with, than the tape on the Captain's documents.

Meanwhile I had lost no time in going to the Countess to explain. She was not at home the first day, but she was good enough to allow me to fix an early hour for seeing her. I could not but observe, that she seemed both disconcerted and offended, when I related my interview with the King; but the candour with which I told her of it,

of the secret I had promised to keep, and of my resolution to do so, restored everything. "I take the compliment you design me," said her Ladyship, "and must own you are a courtier of a very new and agreeable sort: I wish everybody's word could be as well relied on. But have a care of the Duke." She contrived to make me let her see that I did not like him; which so pleased her, that she invited me to bring some French airs the next evening but one.

A circumstance occurred, the day before I went, which completed her kind dispositions towards me, but had nearly lost me some others. The Duke had directed me to keep an eye, at a certain hour, on the door at which the court got off their horses, when they returned from riding. I was to put myself in the way, and if Miss Stewart was there, and the hour was propitious, his Grace was to give me a sign, upon which I was to make use of it to thank her. The meaning of this was, that as soon as the Queen had gone in, and provided Lady Castlemain was not present, I was to say what I intended; but not otherwise. Such was the "convenient opportunity" (though of course I knew nothing of it at the time) of which the King had spoken. I only wondered, why there should be any delay in so simple a matter.

On the Wednesday I saw the whole honorable body of the maids arrive on their palfreys. The King and the Duke were there; but no signal. I therefore contented myself with making my bows of gratitude. The Duke helped Miss Stewart off her horse:—Hamilton (George Hamilton) helped Miss Wells, Grammont the Duchess of Buckingham: (it was the first time these gentlemen had been pointed out to me):—some other ladies, I wondered to see alight without help; but what was my surprise and indignation on observing Lady Castlemain among the forlorn? She had her yellow plumes on, which, contrasted with her dark locks, and accompanied by a melancholy expression of countenance, made me wonder that anybody could be so barbarous. What must I needs do then, like an honest coxcomb, but step from the crowd, and offer her my assistance! She was going to decline it; but seeing my face, and casting a flushed look at somebody, she permitted my services; then curtseyed as if she had never seen me before, and went in among the first.

“Well done, cousin mine,” said a fellow among the bystanders; “one must needs make a Duke stare on occasion.” I turned round, and gave him to understand that I would make a plebeian stare, if he did not behave himself. He excused

his impertinence by reason of his "not having sooner noted my quality;" which was a doubtful apology, but such as I chose to put up with.

The French airs had a high reception that evening. Lady Castlemain began by asking me as I went in, whether I had a mind to be ruined. "You will say no," continued she; "and that it is the part of a gallant man to gain success by daring it. Well; I am in no humour to oppose the fancies of my defender: and now let me advise you of three things; first, that you must enable me to perform this duet to admiration, for the Duke says you brought it up; second, that you are to thank Miss Stewart to-morrow, my Lady Castlemain permitting; and third, that on the morrow after next Sunday, Mr Esher is to be in readiness to attend upon the King's Majesty, in the quality of one of his Majesty's cup-bearers."

The intoxication into which all this threw me, enabled me to behave myself properly. Lady Castlemain behaved like the kindest patroness in the world. She told me a thousand things of herself, of the King, and court, of old times and new, of plays and romances, and of all that had been done, was doing, and might be. Her Ladyship insisted on my telling her what I thought of the town. She laughed and sighed by turns; regretted that romances were not true,

though for aught she saw they might be truer than they were ; turned all I said into grace and prettiness ; and was pleased to observe, that she never had met with a person who united so little necessity for experience, with so small a portion of it.

Her Ladyship delighted me by her knowledge of romances. She told me she used to read them for weeks together when she was eleven years old, in a great chamber, big enough for a giantess ; and that her father, the Lord Grandison, (what a noble name ! cries everybody) was wont to call her *Stattira*. She laughed when I told her, that I had thought of her under the same name. “ At the end of those weeks,” added she, “ I would not attend to them for a moment, nor, indeed, to anything else but running about the park, and riding, and making my cheeks as hard and as red as those false peaches. But I retained so much love for them, meanwhile, as to call my horse a palfrey, and baptize it *Bucephalus*.” She said she once spent a month’s pocket-money in feeding him with gilt oats, then dressed him up in a damask curtain, and made a cousin of her’s lead her upon it, her head crowned with laurel, and the youth blowing a trumpet. This was not her cousin George (the Duke of Buckingham) ; he and she had never been friends. When a boy he behaved to her “ as ill as a brother to a sister ;” and when suitors made their

appearance, he thought proper to take a fancy to her, and be jealous. It was alternately peace and war with them, to the present day ; not (as she hinted) without a like reason ; but the King was the best-tempered of men ; delighted in making peace ; and “ so we are all very charitable at present,” concluded her Ladyship, “ more especially my injured self ; and are to have no nonsense for a month to come, but a great deal of good sense and dancing ; and the Queen comes to my apartments to-night, to a party.”

The secret (as I afterwards found) of this sudden change, was an interview, the night before, between her Ladyship and his Majesty, during which the former, in a very sudden way, and such as I had no notion of for some time, resumed all her ascendancy. But of this bye and by. The King, the Duke of Buckingham, Miss Stewart, all went for nothing ; the Queen was secretly glad to make common cause with one whom she had ceased to regard as her first enemy : and before the week’s end, everybody was persuaded, that the reign of Villaria (as the Duke called her) would be eternal.

His Grace, for reasons best known at that time to himself, chose to put a good face on the matter when he saw me. I could discern that he was piqued ; but I was so grateful for escaping his anger, that I not only succeeded in excusing my-

self on good grounds, particularly with reference to the Captain, but pleased him with a greater shew of affection than I had latterly been moved to evince. He said, "I was a good lad," and that "all parties should consent to the making of me, since I could keep the secrets of all." Lady Castlemain's admonition here came across me; and for the first time I began to have suspicions about the Captain; but I was so gratified with the compliment, in addition to the joy I had experienced in seeing all things go well, that I derived a pleasure from thus bordering on something perilous for the Duke's sake. My vanity did for him, what his own had prevented; and I said something in consequence, which made him look as hard at me, as he did at our first meeting. I observed that something with difficulty remained in his thoughts. He shook his head, and cried gaily, "The women! the women!"

'He talks to me that never yet was pump'd.' "

His Grace was proceeding in a strain of banter, when he suddenly turned grave, and complimented me in such high terms, that I knew not what to think of either of us. This style he almost as quickly dropped, and said, "Well then,—now to business," which I observed was a way he had, when his humour was not responded to as he liked. Some affair was easily found to make good his

words. At present it concerned the regulation of my devoirs to Miss Stewart, in the midst of which his Grace took up his violin, and said, "The duet in E, Ralph, or I die of these absurdities."

The next morning his Grace complained of being mixed up with the riding parties. He called himself Slave of the Horse to the King's Majesty; and ran on with so diverting an extravagance about the King's being a centaur, centaurs wearing perukes, mares of honour prancing down Whitehall in petticoats a mile long, and Lord Clarendon having four gouty legs as Chiron, with a bag of oats to puff and blow into, that I writhed in my chair with laughing. He had discovered that I did not like jests that undervalued the sex, which always made him say the more to that end; so that finding me laugh heartily in spite of myself, his good humour was unbounded. He then set out, directing me when to follow, and bidding me, when I kissed Miss Stewart's hand, think of "Hylonome."

I was in good time for the dismounting of the riders. The Queen, I observed, was not present. Her Majesty was ill, with dancing after supper. The Duke smiled and nodded, and the King called me to him. For my part, having become a party to so many of his Majesty's secrets, I hardly knew how to look the Monarch in the face. I comforted

myself, however, with adoring him as a good-natured prince, and being ready to die in his defence; and the bashfulness soon wore off, for reasons common to us all.

The King said to Miss Stewart, "Here is your Knight of the Merlin, come to thank you for his advancement." Miss Stewart favoured me with her foolish little giggle, adding, in a proper school-girl tone, that she was very glad to have been the occasion of doing me service. She added something which died on her lips, but all very gracious and civil.

I bowed, and withdrew. In due time I was installed in my office: his Majesty was kind enough to bespeak the good-will of the new sphere in which I found myself, by telling my associates that I was "a gentleman of an ancient family, very much in love with the new times, and with wit and poetry; and therefore he hoped they would shew me their countenance."

"His own," whispered Killigrew, as the King retired, "is surely enough for any man." This two-fold or three-fold joke made them laugh. I found that the royal visage was held to be ill-favoured; it had appeared to me far otherwise. It was very dark, and strongly featured; but I thought it manly and interesting. The severity that appeared in it, I did not find in his character;

and therefore it went for nothing in his face. Some of them who agreed with me, likened him to the royal animal on his coat of arms; grim and threatening to behold, and all alive, but as harmless as the paint. "He has claws for all that," said Coventry. Killigrew called him "the sly-'un rampant." This was a joke with him for some time afterwards, whenever he happened to be near me, and the King suddenly came in. He would try to disconcert me with a look of grim respect, and saying the words in an under tone. His Majesty, though of a graceful carriage, had sometimes a brisk way of making his appearance, and coming along with hasty steps. "Sly-'un rampant," says Killigrew; and I was obliged to make a horrible contortion of the mouth to avoid laughing. It put me to real pain; for, besides admiring the King, as much as any one, for his wit, I loved him; and I used to think it ungrateful. However, these misgivings wore off.

CHAPTER VIII.

I FOUND more work than I expected, not in my quality of deputy to the chief cup-bearer, who seemed little inclined to let me trouble him, but in carrying letters to Miss Stewart, and in taking packets from the Duke of Buckingham to Captain Sandford. The Captain lived in a decent lodging in the very heart of the town, but still professed to be hiding from his great enemy. In fact, he could not have chosen a better place to hide in. He told me, from time to time, that he hoped much from the goodness of the Duke of Buckingham; and also to be really of use to him, in that matter of the estate; but it was a point of delicacy, that his Grace should not be seen in connection with a person under the displeasure of the Lord Steward of the Household.

I wondered at this, knowing the open dislike which Buckingham professed for Ormond; but wonder itself soon became familiar to me at court.

The correspondence I kept as secret as the grave. It was a point of honor. I was equally close with regard to that with Miss Stewart, to whom his Majesty seemed to think that I belonged. On the other hand, I fancied I belonged to Lady Castlemain; and the King's mistake helped to increase the fancy.

I now learnt, that the Countess had received her information respecting me from the young lady who sat with her on my first interview; and that this young lady was Miss Warmestre.

"What, madam! my cousin, as I used to call her?"

"No," returned her Ladyship, laughing, "I doubt, from what I hear of her, whether even my courtly presence would have restrained little Nelly."

"Nelly! Her name was Lucy."

"I know not how that may be," said Lady Castlemain; "I believe they have not fixed upon any of her names yet."

"And who then is Mr Warmestre?"

"Mr Warmestre is a Mr Braythwaite, a distant relation of Lord Orrery."

I was thunderstruck. "And pray, madam," said I, "will your Ladyship complete the introduction which you are so kind as to give me to my old acquaintances, by informing me who I am myself?"

I received an answer, which diverted my atten-

tion, at the moment, from everything but the kindness of it; but seeing me prepared to make new inquiries, "Nay," said she, "I can tell you but little more. All that I know of Mr Braythwaite is, that he is a gentleman of a very grave reputation, who being married, but having no children, is so fatherly as to take care of the children of others. Warmestre (which some confound with Warminster) is a name that seems to be no longer the property of any one but the young lady who bears it; and even she is thought to be somebody else. Not that she is aware of that circumstance. She takes herself at present for herself. But she is very like Miss Kirke, daughter of Mr Kirke, one of the Grooms of his Majesty's Bedchamber. Mr Kirke swears that she is her cousin, who has never been allowed to see her before by reason of a family dispute; so now the father being dead, the young lady is brought to court, and has just been appointed one of my sisters in office, the duties of which I have undertaken to instruct her in. It is my cousin Buckingham's doing. I have undertaken to oblige him, in order to show him my good will."

"And little Nelly, madam? It is my last question. Have you nothing further to tell me of her?"

"I know not whether that would be quite so proper," replied her Ladyship. "Did you never hear a story of a young lady, whom the first Duke

of Buckingham brought acquainted with his Majesty's father? The Duke has given me to understand, that some relationship is to be traced between a daughter of that lady and Miss Warmestre. I know not how true it is; but it warrants me in shewing her my countenance, without further question. Now merry little Nell makes no claim of this sort, nor any other. Mr Hart, the player, chose, I believe, to take her mother's word, that she was the daughter of a Welsh gentleman (I forget his name) of great riches, who, being a most forgetful father, could never be brought to think of doing anything for her. Mr Hart, who is a good-natured man, took the father's duties upon him, and placed her, for her better breeding, with Mrs Warmestre; though he is now said to be so enamoured of his good work, as to have turned lover instead of father; and 'tis furthermore said, to the scandal of little Nelly, that she has a great deal of gratitude. She has manifested so great a genius for the stage, that she is to come upon it; and to other day, Mrs Warmestre brought her here at my request, and she was very well behaved, though a wild creature. I encouraged her to laugh and sing, and to shew me some of her mimicry; and she professed to be so much in love with my encouragement, that she took the freedom of nearly killing me."

The day after these surprises (which, I must

own, mortified me a little, especially as my lady joked me upon the gravity of my old passion) I saw Mr Braythwaite himself. He came to take his final leave of me, previously to his going to France, where he said he had resolved upon settling. At the same time he took the opportunity of explaining some little matters, that might seem to have concerned me, though they were in reality of no importance.

I saluted him by his new name. Instead of being disconcerted, he was pleased. It saved him a part of his trouble. He said he need not excuse himself to so generous and so judicious a person as I was, for having changed his name. He had done it at a time, when on account of services to the former government, he hardly knew whether he should be suffered to live. Times had altered, and honest men were safe; but in the meanwhile he had acquired new connections, and he must own, that the fear, however weak, (for he had since become wiser,) of bringing his honesty into question, had led him to delay too long in resuming his true appellation. His noble kinsman, Lord Orrery, had furthermore been angered with him for not sooner discerning the merits of the new people; a mistake in judgment, to say the most of it, surely pardonable; but this was an additional reason, why he had acted as he did. His objection to the new people as governors, had not hindered him from feeling towards

them as Christian men; as he should now proceed to make manifest. I have even, as you have found out, Mr Esher," said he, assuming one of his meek smiles, at once fawning and self-sufficient, for which I always longed to tweak him by the nose, "a fair friend at court, as well as yourself, though not of so high a quality."

"You! Mr War—Braythwaithe!" said I, "I thought you had long renounced the powers of this world, and all that belongs to them?"

"Long ago I did," returned he, an expression of triumphant cunning twinkling in his eyes; "and often," he added gravely, "have I repeated the abjuration; but the more one sees of the world, the more one pities, and is indulgent to it. I have observed so much natural goodness where I used formerly to look for nothing but sin and depravity, that I do own I have not been able to refuse my counsel to some who needed it, even among the rich and powerful. In a word, Mr Esher, I will now just tell you, before I go, a secret which I reserved for this especial time."

He then related to me, in a mysterious manner, and without mentioning names, that he had been applied to on more than one occasion, and by very exalted persons, who had learnt the charitableness of his nature, to charge himself with the maintenance and education of certain young persons, whom,

under the old law, it might have been thought proper to visit with the sins of their fathers. He had had a long struggle with himself in considering whether it was right or wrong to carry his charities so far, but upon the whole he concluded for the Christian side of the excess, and though the task had been one of a great deal more trouble than lucre, which indeed rather enabled him to think it not an ill one,—three such accomplished young ladies did not appear every day, as those who have been entrusted to the care of himself and Mrs Braythwaite. Two of them I had seen, and could judge for myself: “And so,” said he, “my dear young gentleman, you now understand that I entertain as much reverence for a secret as you do; and when next you see your friend Lady Castlemain, be pleased to make known to her Ladyship my gratitude for the kindness she has shown to Miss Warmestre. The young lady was requested to speak very kindly of you in order to smooth away the chances of her Ladyship’s opposition; but this you have done for yourself with a judgment and a good fortune, that I shall never cease to admire.”

There was now and then a tone of assumption in the midst of this person’s fawning manner, which I attributed to the authority he had received over me from my mother; I was therefore in the habit of regarding it as little as I did his flattery;

for though he had discovered that I liked flattery well enough, he had not found out that I was not fond of it from him. With all his cunning he had not the art of making it agreeable; a defect, more common than is suspected. Perhaps there is not one more common with pretenders of all kinds; nor less conceivable by their understanding.

Mr Braythwaite concluded with saying, as he took up his hat, that he did not intend to take any leave of the Captain. He had not seen him a long time; to say the truth, the poor man had grown so captious with his misfortunes, and he, (Braythwaite) saw so little chance of the Duke's being able to do anything for him, equal to his desires, which began to be a little extravagant, that a visitor who could do nothing at all might as well keep away. He said nothing of my going to and fro with the Duke's packets, and as I concluded him not in the secret of my having been turned to such regular account, I said nothing calculated to let him into it. The packets had not come so thick of late; the Duke, like his master, seemed absorbed in pleasures; and I began to think this system of government so agreeable, that I was glad to give up all thoughts of guardians, disbanded officers, troubles, hypocrisies, or anything else but a new play or a fashion. When Mr Braythwaite turned his back, I seemed to

behold the departing skirts of all that was grave and disagreeable.

With regard to Miss Nelly (what's her name? cried I to myself with vexation), I did not feel at all comfortable. In the first place, I thought myself taken in; secondly, I was afraid I had been in love; thirdly, it looked very like it, for I felt jealous; fourthly, I had no right to be so; fifthly, suppose my companions should know it; sixthly, how was I to go to the play and see her? and seventhly, how was I to avoid it? I amused Lady Castlemain with the earnestness with which I begged her to keep my secret; and then I went to Miss Warmestre, to entreat her to shew a like humanity.

I had not spoken to this young lady since I saw her at Epsom. My behaviour then had been a little abrupt and unwarrantable, but it was caused by feelings of devotion to another of her sex. I now feared that the latter had not been so deserving. Would to heaven, thought I, I had loved the real Miss Warmestre instead. Thus ungrateful was I, at a moment's notice, to the sweet lips of the one, because she turned out to be nobody; and thus prepared to think highly of the other, because she was said to have some pretensions, which nobody knew anything about.

I found her very kind and acquiescent. Miss

Warmestre was really handsome, and I now wondered I had not thought her superior to Nell. Her figure was not perfect; but she was tall, buxom, and of a good carriage, and her face was healthy and good humoured. Instead of being angry, I found in her manner a sort of thankfulness, calculated to affect a less coxcomb than I was. In short, I perceived she had a great deal of good-nature; and I was very sensible of it. She spoke handsomely of Lady Castlemain, of Nelly, of everybody.

I must except Mr Braythwaite. She confessed she did not like him; which doubled the effect of her good will to every one else. At the same time she knew little about him. That was the ground of her quarrel. She had lived with him two or three years, yet knew little more than I did. But somebody, she thought, must know a great deal; for he took long journies, and seemed to have a world of business in his head. Mrs Braythwaite, his wife, was a good easy body, who let every one do as they pleased. She was a clergyman's daughter, and taught the young ladies to read and write and play on the harpsichord. Provided they exhibited a reasonable quantity of music, went to church, and said nothing of the little parties she had in Mr Braythwaite's absence, nothing was said of them. A

little slyness and a great deal of good humour, were the order of the day on the lady's side: slyness and reserve were the gentleman's; and if he had a satisfaction in keeping his secret, the rest of the family had no less in keeping him out of theirs. As to being his nieces, the young ladies really took themselves for such, though they did not well know how it had come about.

Notwithstanding my jealousy, I was willing to put off my encounter with Miss Nelly. I was resolved to take my chance, and see her in public like other play-goers. Meanwhile I should have fallen in love with the new Miss Warmestre had I not thought myself under the most heroical obligations to worship my Lady Castlemain.

Alas! I knew little about love; but I was young and grateful. Something might have been made of me in those times, if the times themselves, or rather the court, had known more than I did; but we were all pretty much on a par; except that the readers of the romances had the best of it.—The oldest were the worst, as they are apt to be, if bad at all. But no distinctions were heard of between young and old. All dressed and talked, and laughed and buffooned alike, the most romantic always excepted; for it was impossible to read those great folios, full of faith of all kinds, and not have a little faith in something. A certain degree

of it was necessary in order to read them. It is true there were some very strange readers. Odd it was to see Harry Blagg or Coventry resume his *Cleopatra* at page four thousand and one, with all the seriousness of the last night's debauch in his aspect, and start off occasionally to yawn and swear. You would find a paper marking a passage full of the highest virtue and devotedness, where somebody had left off; and the paper should consist of the last new song in praise of infidelity. The maids of honor had several of these folios in their common room. They were full of marginal readings in manuscript, of blottings out, and of caricatures scrawled over. "Madam," said one of the columns, "when I consider those chaste perfections . . ."—"I marvel," said the manuscript reading, "at their merry recollections."

One of those who least cared for romances was the Duke of Buckingham; and the King was another. Lady Castlemain, I could not but observe, had long given them up. Mr Waller declared he should always retain a regard for them, and I believed him. You had but to quote a passage containing the word "beauty," or "majesty," and he assumed a look full of worship and dignity, and would say something fine upon it. Mr Killigrew (I mean the father—the Killigrew that had been Venetian ambassador,) was another, who, in despite

of all the pranks he had played, and the strange things he had written, swore he could not give up his "old young days." There, indeed, lay the secret. He had the aspect of a Venetian senator, and delighted to say the most fantastic things with the gravest face. He was then upwards of fifty. Waller was near sixty. The King was little more than thirty; Buckingham a few years older; Grammont about the same age. Dorset and Sedley about five or six and twenty: Ossory and Arran the same; the former, perhaps, near thirty; and Rochester, who had scarcely made his appearance, not more than seventeen. Lady Castlemain and the other ladies in vogue, were not more than about five and twenty. But there was as little distinction as possible of ages. Even the Queen Dowager, it was said, when handed along by my Lord St Albans, (for I had not yet seen her) gave herself airs of youth. Perukes were not in universal wear at that time, but those who had not fine heads of hair were rapidly adopting them. The Duke (of York) had put on his; and the King, who was already grey, was about to follow. We were all waiting for his Majesty, to know how we should wear our hair, whether false or natural, so as to look like his. The royal crinosity was naturally a deep black, and it struggled hard to look black still, besides being ample and grim. When he turned suddenly upon

you, he looked like a black lion who had thrust his face through a hedge in winter.

But he was as merry as the rest, or merrier. The phrase of "merry monarch," which came up afterwards, was first given him libellously by Lord Rochester; but he deserved it in good earnest, notwithstanding his melancholy, for he had a good portion of that too, though he fought hard to have none. You might wear a grim aspect, if nature had given you one, but it was next to treason to think of being gravely in earnest, and not laugh and joke. It seemed, as if by common consent, we had all set out in life at the same epoch, and all just arrived at the age of indiscretion (doubtless the proper term, instead of the one commonly used). Buckingham was a greater boy than Rochester; and Rochester all of a sudden grew as old as Sir John Denham, and as vicious. Waller consented to be old, but his verses kept him young. Poets are always young, if they chuse. "They talk five-and-twenty," said Lady Chesterfield. They have only not to get fat. At least I have known others besides her Ladyship who thought so. I suppose the ladies know not how to be grateful enough to those who confer immortality.

If men had been butterflies, and the world nothing but sunshine, those had been fine times. I retain a decent respect for good clothing still; but I some-

times wonder to think of the profound gravity with which I could then discuss the tie of a cravat, or the colour of a ribbon. What debates have we not had in the pages' room, whether a coat should be blue and silver, or blue and gold: whether it should be pinked upon green, or upon peach blossom: how many yards of ribbon it should carry; what size of a rose in the shoe best set off the leg; and on which shoulder one ought to bring over one's tresses or one's peruke, in order to suit the gallantry of the countenance. The left shoulder generally carried it; vigour, it was said, coming from the right side, and prompting the face to turn upon the left. But there was a heresy, a year or two after I came to court, in favour of the reverse opinion. Lord Arran brought it up, because of his guitar, and he converted the others for a time: "*for*," said he, "the sword being on the left side, and the act of playing the guitar leaning that way, rather than to the right, the vivacity of the look is of necessity thrown over upon the right shoulder, and therefore the hair should be crossed in that direction." But they said he did it, because his left cheek would bear the more open display.

I passed a delightful winter, carrying messages, going to plays, dining, drinking, dressing, and hearing the King and his courtiers talk. By degrees I was encouraged to talk myself. I got a reputa-

tion for being both a hearty and a judicious admirer of wit and poetry, and this procured me the regard of the men I was most anxious to please. Lord Buckhurst liked me because I was discriminating; Sir John Denham, because I listened with respect; Sir Charles Sedley, because none of his similes were lost on me; and Mr Waller, because I thought him the greatest poet that ever was. I had some misgiving on that point, when I thought of poor Mr Cowley, who died not long afterwards. Mr Sprat (lately made Bishop of Rochester, then the Duke of Buckingham's chaplain,) took me to see that great and good man in his retreat in the country, where he talked so delightfully of rural pleasures, that I began to sigh after my old fields, till I heard him say he had realized nothing but agues, and that the Arcadians in his vicinity were anything but what they should be. He thought, however, he should find them a little higher up the river.

The doctor was certainly the death of him;—I mean Dr Sprat. They had been drinking at a friend's house in the neighbourhood, and returning home at midnight, mistook their way, and so remained till daylight under a hedge, which gave the poet a cold that killed him. The Dean has another story; but so he had about Cromwell.

His reverence was a hale hearty fellow at that time, in the prime of life, and accustomed to the Duke of Buckingham's claret. He ought to have carried the divine old boy on his back, rather than suffer him to perish. 'Tis true, he might not have been quite as stable as he was vigorous; but he might have shouted. I have heard him loud enough after his third bottle, with the Duke and Mat Clifford. Let me add, as a candid king's evidence, that I never approved of the loudness with which he ended his drinking, because of the softness with which he began it.

I could record some discourses I heard at Buckingham's table with Lord Buckhurst, Sedley, Shepherd, and Andrew Marvell; whom his Grace used to call merry St Andrew: but perhaps I shall be able by and bye to relate some others better, which I heard when I was a little older, and when I could better relish them. Besides, I have other stories to tell. My experiences were destined to have a great lift given them shortly; and I found a friend who will cut the best figure in these pages, though it is the gravest. A terrible year was approaching: the year of the Plague, of the Great Fight, and of the Fire; and my friend and I, by some remarkable chances, had a shrewd taste of them all. But the court buzzed again, like gnats in the sunshine, as

if none of them had been swept away; and meanwhile they buzzed as merrily as if nothing was going to happen.

It was now the summer of the year sixty-four.* Politics were quiet, or seemed to be so. Proud Clarendon had escaped an impeachment, but was expecting another in grief and gout; and the merry-makers had it all their own way. Nothing in the morning but breakfasting, bowling, dressing, or boating; nor in the afternoon but drinking, gaming, and play-going; nor all the rest of the time but riding, dancing, guitar-tinkling, loitering, and love-making. Item, supper; item, the parks. Now we were at Hampton Court; now at Greenwich; now at Tunbridge, Newmarket, St Albans. Then we went to Epsom; and I was afraid to ask after Miss Randolph.

I had taken Captain Sandford's word for it, that Clarendon was a bad man; and though I heard some things that made me doubt it, there was no doubt that he was a proud and dictatorial one; and these things go hard to convince a young man. It was pretty clear, I thought, that his Lordship was pulling down other men's faults with his own. The Duke of Ormond, who came seldom among us, I held in greater suspicion, also on the Captain's

account, but partly from what was said of him by the merry-makers, who, nevertheless, did not treat him as they did Clarendon. One of his sons, Lord Arran, was of the merry system; and the elder, Lord Ossory, I could not help loving for the handsome toleration he put upon it, though he mixed with us but little. By degrees I began to think better of Ormond, because I thought worse of Buckingham; and because his sons, and indeed everybody else, spoke well of him. And his own noble aspect confirmed the impression. Besides, he professed a most inflexible regard for the King, and he shewed it; nor did I perceive any of the ill effects from his presence, that some talked of, unless it consisted in rendering the conversation rather cheerful than merry, and putting us upon a good taste and tranquillity of behaviour that was very delightful. Lady Castlemain and he were not good friends, and yet sometimes she never looked so beautiful in my eyes as when he was by. The vehemence in her manner became composed, and her aspect was occasionally so touching and even submissive, that if I could have quarrelled with him for anything, it was for not paying her more attention. Captain Sandford began to appear to me a most mistaken disbanded officer; and as I had no packets for him just now, and the Duke of Buckingham never mentioned his name, I began

to eject him from my memory as an inconvenience.

There was no such re-action in favour of Clarendon. Everything told against him, particularly his aspect. He would never speak nor even look if he could help it, at Lady Castlemain; and that offended my romance. He was always lecturing the King on his pleasures; and it was agreed that he wanted lecturing on his own. Being slender young gentlemen, or not yet arrived at the time of life or the opinions, in which the person is less studied, we held in horror the intemperance that makes fat. "The gross knave," said Buckingham, "turns himself into a shambles, and then holds him qualified to talk of decency." "'Tis the corpulentest puppy," quoth Sir George Hewit.

Sir George, who was our fop of fops, and the prince of the drawling indifferent manner, then newly come up, and which affected to be incapable of receiving impressions but from something very exquisite, had lately committed himself, when two gentlemen were introduced to him, by saying, in his extremest style,—“Which—is—which?” Buckingham who laughed at everybody, friend or foe, had got hold of this; and one day he and Colonel Titus got up a scene that made us roll with laughter. The King had taken it into his head to try if wool-sacks like those used in the House of

Lords, would make pleasant cushions for an apartment. He had some made, that were of black velvet, laced with gold. Buckingham said they were as fat and melancholy as the Chancellor; and this reminding him of the Chancellor seated in the House, he made Titus put one of the sacks upon the other, with his head puffing and blowing over the top for Clarendon: then somebody introduced him as Sir George: "Sir George Hewitt, permit me to bring you acquainted with his lordship the Chancellor, and with his lordship's woolsack;" upon which the Duke, shrugging and drawling in the manner of Sir George, said, "Which—is—which?"

Another time his Grace, having made a heartier dinner than usual, threw himself back in his chair, and puffing and looking loftily about him, exclaimed. "It is amazing, sirs, the modern grossness of manners!—Here you fellow—a bottle out of the fifth bin:—and to-morrow, see that the sauce hath another ham to it—I was going to forget the fellow's presence, my zeal so eateth me up; but what think you of all this junketting, my Lord! (*here he puffs*)—and this dancing, Mr Treasurer! (*here a twinge of the gout*)—and this courting, Mr Secretary! No consideration preserved; not a cook nor a kitchen-wench made love to in decent privacy—*—cautè, si non castè*—but real ladies and gentlewomen,—creatures well bred, my Lord Duke! of

high breeding, Mr Treasurer! (*puffs*); of the most engaging demeanour, Mr Secretary!" (*blows*.)

With a succession of these jokes he used to convulse the King; and very serious jokes they turned out to the Chancellor. It is to be observed, that no credit was given to the latter for any virtues he laid claim to. The truth is, his Lordship was honest enough not to pretend to some of them, retrospectively. He could also be more gay and pleasant over his wine, than his enemies liked; and indeed was a very agreeable host, having plenty of stories to relate, and a fine understanding. But at court, credit was given to nobody, for continency of any sort; and the Chancellor, in pretending to have given up the follies of his youth, only aggravated and embittered the incredulity. It was asserted, that he offended as much as anybody, with less excuse; and the candour about his youth was only turned into a proof of it.

One jest in particular made a great noise. It got to the Chancellor's ears, and I believe was the cause of some unlucky expressions and perversities which escaped him at that time, and are supposed to have hastened his overthrow. It was an imitation of his Lordship's passage to the Court of Chancery. I did not see it, but I heard it related by Sir Thomas Osborne (afterwards Lord Danby) who was present. The King sits with his company in a

room that has two opposite doors. One of them is suddenly thrown open; and there enters towards the other, a procession like that of the Chancellor, Titus carrying a pair of bellows for the mace; Savile holding a bag of enormous dimensions for the purse; and Buckingham coming behind, swelling and staring, for the great man. This scene was repeated backwards and forwards, to the endless delight of the spectators; and till the Queen who had lately joined the merry-makers, was fain to bid them hold, for fear of mischief to the succession.

Buckingham had generally some cant joke going forward, which was his favourite whim for the season; or he had two or three at a time. At this period he was all for music and parodies. He was always parodying Shakspeare; and one of his favourite jokes against Clarendon was to liken him to Falstaff. He said that the only difference between him and Falstaff was, that he was "not pleasant." He was a Falstaff without the good fellowship, and was for robbing the Exchequer by himself.

Thus instead of the "travellers" robbed by Falstaff, Buckingham would read "cavaliers." It was a complaint against Clarendon, that the old royalists could get nothing out of him but by bribes, which they were seldom rich enough to afford, so that the rebels and presbyterians were advanced,

while the King's friends, plundered of what they had had, on all sides were left in the lurch:—

Buckingham, as Clarendon. “Down with'em! Fleece'em!”

Cavaliers. “Oh we're undone, both we and ours for ever.”

Clarendon. “Hang ye, gorbellied knaves, are ye undone? No, ye fat chuffs. What! Young men must live. You are grand jurors, are ye? We'll jure ye, i'faith.”

Where Falstaff's pocket is picked, Buckingham turned it into the Chancellor's.

Buckingham. “'Tis Hyde! fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like a horse.”

Titus or Savile (acting the King). “Hark! how hard he fetches breath! Search his pockets. (They search.) What hast thou found?”

Buckingham. “Nothing but papers, my lord.”

Titus. “Let's see what they be. Read 'em.”

Buckingham. “Item, A capon,—one and two-pence.

Item, Sauce,—two shillings,

Item, Frontigniac, two gallons.

Item, Lord Pomfret's estate.

Item, Orphan's cries,—fi'pence.

Item, Anchovies, and Frontigniac after supper.

Item, Betty, a penny.”

Titus. “Oh monstrous! a penn'orth of love to all this repletion.”

Here the King, in his own royal person, is moved to a merry oath, at which Buckingham exclaims:

“Swear’st thou, ungracious boy? Thou art silently carried away from grace. There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of a fat old man. A ton of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swoln parcel of dropsies, that reverend extortion, that grey hypocrisy, that pride and vanity in years? Where is he good but to get money and drink it? Wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon, or convey an estate? Wherein knowing, but in craft? Wherein crafty, but in all things?”

Savile (acting the Chancellor). “I would your Grace would take me with you. Whom means your Grace?”

Buckingham. “That villanous corpulent Earl, that misleader of the King, Hyde; that old white-headed Viscount.”

The King (speaking in his own person). “My Lord, the man I know.”

Buckingham. “Thanks be to the lord that thou dost, for then we know who will be known for the true prince, whom God preserve. Ah, sir; banish fat Hyde, and banish all your cares.”

CHAPTER IX.

It was lucky that I had been instructed about Miss Nelly, for on going to the play one night, who should be the heroine of it but she herself! It was her first appearance. She was handsomer than ever, and seemed as if she could be wilder, but the occasion subdued her. It now and then threw over her aspect a new and touching shade of timidity. I felt my love fast returning, in spite of her occupation; and it was not diminished by the applauses of the theatre, or by the King's sending for her into his box after the play. "How now," said I, "Mr Ralph Esher, art thou not growing a pretty rascal! Yesterday thou wert becoming ashamed of the actress, and willing to know nothing about her. To-night, because people admire her, and a King pinches her on the cheek, thou art going headlong to pay her thy respects behind the scenes!"

Accordingly, not to baulk the reasonableness of my apostrophe, I went. I took care, however, to be among the last, when the crowd of fops and enquirers had diminished. Miss Gwynn (for that was her new name) spied me in a twinkling. She directed her cordial smile to me through a host of admirers, and said, with the best air imaginable, full of modesty as well as regard, "I think I have the honor of seeing Mr Esher; I hope he is well." I went forward, and expressed my delight at seeing her again, under circumstances which made the world acquainted with her talents; and when the crowd had gone away, she took me into a room where she had to wait for Mr Hart. The door was no sooner closed, than she said, in her former quick way, "May I call you Ralph, when we're alone? and will you call me Nelly? and do you remember the laugh we had when I first saw you?"

I was so pleased, that I felt inclined to behave as if I were not so. The tenderness in her manner looked as if I retained a hold on her affections, while her aspect of joyous good health piqued me, as if I had had a right to see it less gay. I answered with the proper warmth, but immediately added, "Why did you not let me know what you were doing?"

"Mr Warmestre would not let me. He was angry with his wife for letting me come to see you,

and perhaps he was right. A little more, and neither the King's page, nor the little actress, would have known how unsuitable they were to each other."

She said this in such a pretty questioning manner, and with such an unaffected mixture of regret and congratulation, that while I was chagrined at her not feeling the "little more" for myself, I could not help recollecting that I had failed to do it for her.

I was muttering something between joke and earnest about faithlessness, when she cried out in her old tone of playfulness, "Not a morsel of it! Nobody has been faithless; nor" (added she, laughing, and half shutting her arch eyes) "faithful either, as far as I can see. Lord bless me, Mr Esher, actresses have not all the faithlessness in the world to themselves. Courts and king's pages have a little bit of it. *Are you always so?*"

She uttered this last sentence in a low voice, coming close to me, and mimicking her own manner so perfectly at our first interview, that both of us were thrown into our old fit of laughter.

"And now, Mr Esher," said she, "being so faithful, you are impatient to know about Miss Randolph?"

"Miss Randolph!" cried I, with new astonish-

ment; "how can you know anything about her?"

"Ah!—you see!" cried Nelly:—"Well, you must know, in the first place, that Miss Warmestre came to see you; secondly, ladies talk; and thirdly, Miss Randolph's father died, and the care of her was transferred to Mrs Warmestre. She remained with us but a little while, and whither she has gone I know not."

It was with some trepidation I asked after Miss Randolph's health. "Oh, she seemed very well," said Miss Gwynn, "and was as gentle and pleasant as a lamb; so you did not break her heart, you monster."

Will it be believed, that in the very midst of the relief and the unequivocal delight which I felt at hearing of this young lady's welfare, a pang of mortified self-love came over me, in thinking that my loss had not made her a little more wretched? I hastened to get rid of the unworthy feeling, and turned the discourse to the merry creature before me.

She then told me of her situation and prospects; how kind Mr Hart had been to her, in giving her an education, and how he had been her second love, though she had not thought proper to let me know it.

“Your *second*,” said I, “Miss Warmestre!—I beg pardon, Miss Gwynn!—I beg pardon, dear Nelly! Why you are more faithless than a King’s page. And pr’ythee who was the first?”

“My first!” returned Nelly, with great seriousness,—“But you won’t mention it, Mr Esher,—I beg pardon, Mr Ralph,—I beg pardon, dear Ralph,” (and here the giddy creature laughed and patted me on the cheek);—“but indeed” (and here she resumed her seriousness) “I would not have anybody know it, not even yourself, if you had not been almost as much in love as I was;—but my first love, you must know, was a link-boy.”

“A what!”

“’Tis very true,” said she, “for all the frightfulness of your *what*; and a very good soul he was too, poor Dick! and had the heart of a gentleman. God knows what has become of him; but when I last saw him, he said he would humbly love me to his dying day; and if I ought to think myself faithless to anybody, ah—but no matter for that,—I believe he loved me so much, that I could not love him enough in return; for he used to say that I must have been a lord’s daughter for my beauty, and that I ought to ride in my coach; and he behaved to me as if I did. Do you know who my mother was, Mr Esher?”

“I have heard.”

“Why then you have heard right, I’ll be sworn. Well; Richard would light me and my mother home to our lodgings in Lewkner’s lane, after we had sold our oranges, as if we had been ladies of the land. He said he never felt easy for the evening, till he had asked me how I did; then he went gaily about his work; and if he saw us housed at night, he slept like a prince.”

“A great heart may be in a lowly station,” said I, trying to reconcile my dignity to a story, which the glimpses I had had of love induced me to think better of than I supposed: “Shakspeare himself, they say, was a link-boy.”

“And Cardinal Wolsey the son of a butcher,” said Nelly; “and Sir Christopher Minns, the great admiral, has a father living, who is a shoemaker. Mr Hart told me a great many of those things, and that is why I took a liking to him. But lord! how disconsolate you look, Mr Esher! won’t you take a chair?”

The union of these two fancies made me laugh. She laughed heartily at my laughing, and then said, shaking her head, “Ah, there’s nobody loved better than poor Dick. I’ll tell you, Mr Esher, the first time I thought he should have been a gentleman born, was when he came, blushing and stammering,—he, a blackguard boy too, as he was,—and drew out of his pocket a pair of worsted

stockings, which he had bought for my naked feet. Neither of us wore stockings; but it was bitter cold weather; and I had chilblains, which made me hobble about, till I cried. So what does poor Richard, but work like a horse, and buy me these worsted stockings. My mother bade me let him put them on, and so I did, and his warm tears fell on my chilblains; and he said he should be the happiest lad on earth, if the stockings did me any good. Ah! they make all their lovers to be kings and generals, but the most loving voice I ever heard on the stage is Mr Hart's, when he plays Othello; and the first time I heard it, it reminded me of Dick Smith's, when he put the stockings on. I told Mr Hart so too, and he said I paid him the greatest compliment he ever had in his life; and he is a very clever knowing man, is Mr Hart—the King says so, and so does everybody."

I do not know whether the jade instinctively enlisted the royal judgment on her side, in order to give my better feelings their play; but I talked so well about Richard Smith, that she was pleased to say, it was well she had not told me the story before. "I used to fancy, Mr Esher," said she, "that you cared about as much for me, as I had done for half a dozen young gentlemen players. Don't be frightened—there's nothing in it; but I begin to think I might have got you into trouble."

So saying, the giddy creature twirled me with her hand, and was in the act of singing and laughing, and flying me round and round, when her guardian Mr Hart came into his room, to take her home. He bowed to me, and said with great good humour, "Well, Miss Gwynn, I guess I have the honor of seeing Mr Esher."

"Yes, dear Mr Hart," said Nelly; "and Mr Esher is impatient for his supper, for he and I have danced ourselves into a devouring appetite."

I was going to protest I had not thought of trespassing upon Mr Hart's hospitality, when he gave me to understand, in the politest manner, that these gaieties were a matter of course, wherever Miss Gwynn was concerned; and that nothing was more agreeable to him, than to see her pleased; adding something about the honor which I must do him at all times by my company. "At this especial moment however," said he, "we are all demanded elsewhere, for I come express from my Lady Castlemain, to fetch both Miss Gwynn and Mr Esher to her apartments in Whitehall; the young actress being then and there to repeat one of her scenes, and the gentleman to wait upon his Majesty. There are more ladies and gentlemen assembled, and we have no time to lose."

Lady Castlemain then had seen me go behind the scenes, or had heard of my doing so: the new

actress was in request; and her Ladyship had taken this opportunity of indulging me in my favourite wish of waiting on the royal person.

Circumstances had often enabled me to follow others into his Majesty's presence. I was encouraged by this friend and by that; and his Majesty seemed pleased to notice me, especially when Miss Stewart was present. But I had never yet officiated in my character as under-cupbearer.

We found a larger company than I expected. The King had brought with him the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Arran, Mr Jermyn, and others, expressly to see the new little actress, who was desired to commence forthwith, as if the play had been continued. I took my station inside the door of the supper room, which was open; and the fears I had entertained of being seen in company with my former mistress, and joked at in consequence, vanished as if I had been nobody. Every face was so absorbed in the new performer, that I almost began to think her a greater personage than myself.

"Charming little Nelly," as they called her, repeated some of the dialogue in which she had been acting, Mr Hart assisting her; and she received unbounded applause. She then danced a new French dance, and sang a new French song with English words to it; and the applause re-

doubled. Miss Stewart was not present: already there was a talk of her presence not being so much wished for, by reason of the charming little ballad-singer. Lady Castlemain however seemed resolved that the diversion to Miss Stewart's disadvantage should not go farther than was proper, for she insisted on treating Miss Gwynn as a child. "Is she not a merry child?" said he; and after the performance, it was, "Come hither, child; the King has a box of comfits for thee:" so saying. she put the box in his Majesty's hand, who gave it my fair friend accordingly, and thus, by her Ladyship's manœuvring, the pat vouchsafed by the royal hand had a look extremely paternal.

"'Tis a pretty child!" said the Countess: "is it not wonderful she can act so well?"—"I have seen many act worse," observed Buckingham, "and a great deal older;" which raised a laugh: for nothing was said at court, but was supposed to have two meanings.

Said Arran, to somebody who stood next him, "Her Ladyship will overdo this infancy, if she doesn't have a care. The King will see more babies in the girl's eyes, than she looks for." For my part, I could not help fancying there was still more in her Ladyship's tactics, than the room discerned.

His Majesty and the Duke of Richmond compli-

mented Mr Hart on the talents of his protégée. They were talking together, and Nelly was standing very prettily under the criticism of the ladies, when I heard Arran's friend say to him, "This is the little girl, is it not, that speaks as she thinks? 'Tis a pity they leave out so rare a gift."—" 'Fore George, 'tis well thought on," said Arran: and went round to his brother. I saw him tap the Earl on the shoulder, who turned about, and they whispered. Ossory smiled, and shook his head. Arran started off to Buckingham, who looked aghast for an instant; then laughed, and rubbed his hands, and proceeded with the notion to the King. The King shrugged his shoulders, but laughed too; and then called for Nelly to come to him.

"What is it?" cried everybody.

"Is it true, my dear, what they tell me," said the good-natured Prince, "that you speak as you think? Why, how came you to court?"

"Mr Hart brought me, sir:" (a laugh)—"Oh, I see what you mean," added Nelly; and she laughed too: "I beg your Majesty's pardon; but your kindness takes away my senses, I think."

"You are a good girl," said the King, much pleased with this ingenuousness; "perhaps I may venture to bid you tell me, what you think of us all now,—at this instant?"

"Oh, sir," returned she, "I have no thought, but of my happiness and of my fear."

"Brava!" said Arran's friend; "she could not have said it better, had she studied a month. Yet what is she but a poor half-taught little stroller? This it is to speak as one feels."

I did not know whether to be more mortified at this speech, or more thankful;—but the King's voice diverted my reflections.

"Well," said his Majesty, "—but what? *But* away, my dear, pr'ythee;" (patting her head) "'tis a head that will do us no harm."

The homage paid to the royal jest gave Nelly a little more time. She said, her *but* meant nothing, except that she could have no *but* if she wished it; at such a time. She thought nothing of anybody, just then; except that surely all the ladies were very handsome, and all the gentlemen very kind."

"Good again," said the King; "and I'll be sworn, she thinks it too, and for the reason she gives us." Lady Castlemain seemed inclined to ask a question or two, but to fear it, having had a specimen of Nelly before. There was a world of jesting and deprecation going on among the ladies.

"What's aw this ye tell us!" cried the Earl of Lauderdale, sputtering his Scotch with his great

tongue: "Truth an' innocence come to court! and in the guise o' a stage-playing lassie!" And with these words, and a sneer in every one of them, he thrust his great heavy face close down to Nelly's.

Nelly started. "The lord be good unto us!" cried she, staring and jerking back.

A roar of laughter announced the defeat of the Earl's movement. Whether the jade was in jest or earnest, or a mixture of both, the effect was the same. Lauderdale's uncouth visage gave to the exclamation the whole force of truth. He started back himself, muttering with genuine rage, "Curse the little quean! I could wring her neck."

His Lordship's mishap put an end to the desire of the spectators to seek further. The new actress was dismissed with applause; and the majority of the visitors taking their leave, the King sat down with a select party to supper.

The party consisted chiefly of ladies. They were not all as beautiful, as Nelly, in the vivacity of the moment, had reason to think them; but for the most part they were undoubtedly so, and Nelly's reputation for truth did not suffer. The least handsome person there was the Duchess of Buckingham, the daughter of Fairfax; who seemed but too likely a representative of the sturdiness and want of grace in the republican party. But she looked good-natured, and little disposed to mortify herself with

grave thoughts. Her body indeed was as little mortified as need be. I had not seen her before, her Grace having been on a visit to her father during my stay at the Duke's. I thought she was as glad to get into merry company again, as the best,—fidgetting, and making herself comfortable between the King and the Duke of Richmond, with an air of jolly expectancy.

Buckingham was there, Lord and Lady Falmouth, Buckhurst, Horton, Shepherd and others; enough to furnish an overflow of wit; and what with the lights, the dresses, the beautiful faces, and a table sparkling with silver and roses; I felt as if I had been promoted to be cupbearer of the gods.

What then have I to say of the discourse? Nothing; except that it turned upon speaking one's mind, and became very edifying. I had ceased to be surprised at conversation, which, to say the truth, would have been very surprising to anybody not intimate with his Majesty's society; but I was so anxious to discharge my office properly, so attentive to the royal thirst, and so conscious of the little jovial butler, who undertook to supply me with nudges, and admonish me of times and seasons, that although I had little to do, I found myself in a state of incompetency to anything else. I could only resolve not to behave like a clown; that is to say, not to stand staring at every pretty

face that spoke ; and, saving the royal presence, I was scarcely sensible of anything upon earth, except that Lady Castlemain was a wonderful woman, and that the tips of my ears seemed to be getting redder and redder.

CHAPTER X.

HITHERTO my life at court had been nothing but rose colour. Few inquiries were made respecting me, when I first came. I was of an ancient family, was enabled to cut a good appearance, by reason of certain jewels that I had received, without trenching upon my income; and, as I made good use of the money that remained, was good-tempered, sang and danced, and was ready for any frolic (for in that respect one extreme followed close with me upon another,) I might reckon myself a general favourite. The reputation of a mistress was not wanting; nor did I lose anything of it by being secret as to the person. I shall say nothing of it even here; nor disclose, whether in fact there was any such person or not. There were but two individuals, both females, from whom I had no secrets; one of them, because I thought myself bound in gratitude to conceal nothing, whether

positive or negative; the other, because circumstances rendered it impossible for me to have a concealment on this particular point, if I would. And the latter was one of the most thorough kind-hearted persons in her way, that I ever knew, and would have fought as hard to keep a secret close, as she would have fought little on any other subject of controversy, not enjoined to a like delicacy. I am writing of a delicate era; and am told that I must reckon upon more readers than I looked for. So in spite of a joke of my friend Shepherd, who said that Horace must have been a man of a very confined ambition, *virginibus puerisque canto*: all I shall add is, that imaginary mistresses being as much in request in those times as real ones, and imaginary names being allowed in the drinking of healths, I had a cant joke that used to get me off admirably; which was the giving some sesquipedalian appellation and proposing a glass for each letter, according to the ancient custom. Nobody had mistresses with such long names as I had; nor was Lucy or Chloris allowed, in my time, at the grooms' or pages' table. It was always Clorinda and Lucinda. This took so well, that the King was pleased to remind me of it several years afterwards, when his Majesty became fonder of drinking than he had been, and he then re-adopted it. Barbara was stretched into Barba-

rina, after the Italian fashion; Anne into Nannette, and Margaret into Margharetina. Grammont, who liked to run to the height of everything, and to add to what he did not originate, was nearly the death of the royal table, by proposing, one night, to drink all the names of a French lady of his acquaintance; which were no less than six; upon which other ladies of the same nation followed; and the French got a new victory over us. It was a *Nox Mirabilis*, was that night; for by the same token, the Count, at two o'clock in the morning, won his great game at push-pin, of the Duke of Buckingham.

But my improvements in Bacchanalian grace were not confined to things nominal. I beg leave to say, that it was I who first revived the ancient custom of decorating wine glasses with flowers, and drinking claret through odorous circlets of myrtle, roses, and jasmin. I had a party, that evening, of Buckhurst, Sedley, Horton, Harry Nevile and Fanshawe. Betty Morice came as *Lalage*; nor were other fair fingers wanting to tie our roses; and Fanshawe said, that he believed Sir Richard* himself would have been glad for once to riot *in impropria personâ*, and enjoy a feast so truly Horatian. I say nothing of my inventions

* Sir Richard Fanshawe, doubtless the translator; to whom this gentleman we presume was a kinsman.—*Edit.*

in sword-knots and shoulder-knots; though if anybody says that he invented the *Chaine d'Amour*, or the Tassel-Gentle (with silver bells in it), I must observe, that the proclamation of seventy-nine does not hinder gentlemen from crossing the water.*

But there were two discoveries, of which nothing shall induce me to give up the glory. The first is, the invention of artificial grapes and vine leaves, which I had the honor of adding to the stock of ornaments worn by the ladies, flowers having been the only artificial wear of the kind up to that epoch; and secondly, I beg leave to have it made known, that it was I, Sir Ralph Esher, of Hethering Bower in the county of Surrey, Baronet, then only in my squirehood, but of ripe years, that did first think of, institute, and cause to be made, those invisible little bottles of water, into which the stalks of real flowers being cunningly conveyed, the said flowers were, and are now enabled, however worn, to retain their freshness a whole evening, to the eternal wonder of the uninitiated, and honor of me their preserver.

But who is to wonder that a genius like this, applauded too and encouraged by such high and fair persons, should suddenly find evil mixed with his good, and envy gnawing at his solid fame?

* To fight duels.—*Edit.*

Going to Mr Killigrew's one morning, to show him a new satire on the Dutch, I saw hanging up over the spot I usually occupied in the common room, a lady's feather hanging from a certain description of cap; and over it, on a fair paper, written these words:

Sic itur ad astra.*

Not knowing who was the perpetrator of this inscription, nor being able, with many questions, to discover (for they had most invincible faces, in those times, at a lie), I hung up in the public view, and upon a nail not appropriated to anybody, a sword valiantly drawn, with the reply following:—

* Sic *fightur* in castra.†

After this I had no more such quips. Kit Musgrave, in a great passion, took down the cap and feather; and so I took down the sword. But I was not so easy in my condition as before. The harmony of it was interrupted. I suspected this person and that, and probably could not help shewing my suspicion: others used to talk of it, not always pleasantly; and I began to think it would be necessary to insult somebody.

The truth is, I dare say, that I had not been able to refrain from giving myself a few airs; but I was

* Thus mount we the skies.

† Thus camps we surprise.

really so good-humoured, and we most of us had such a sprinkling of the coxcomb in our compositions, that nothing but bad blood would have thought of such an attack upon me. I now, for the first time, began to see something mock-heroical in my adventure of the plume : I was angry at not having been introduced at court on the strength of my own merits, or for some proper achievement.

Killigrew laughed ready to burst, when I told him of these fancies. "Faith," said he, "Ralph, now you have done it ! Some proper achievement, quotha ! And where are the proper achievements that have brought all these gentlemen to court, or got them their honours ? Let them bring out their 'scutcheons of pretence, and their foolscaps of maintenance ; and yours, Ralph, shall be among the first, with the lady's feather in it. Let me see—*Chi mi dira, come sangue si fa ?* as they say in Italy. You remember that grave-looking gentleman the other day, who bowed so politely to my Lady Castlemain, and then went and kissed her child, when she had done with it. Oh, ho !—you blush, I see, to think how he got his title ! Well, you simpleton, then there is another Earl, he that was not an hundred miles off the King's person the other night at her Ladyship's supper. If Bab May be not an Earl next, it will not be his fault. He has produced as many fair titles ; or Mrs Russell

swears falsely as well as grievously. Then Elliot—do you know how Elliot's father got his title? Why truly, because he deserved to be hung. The old court fined him a good swinging sum for killing a man; but wanting his service afterwards, they were too poor to refund; and so they made him a knight. Your Duke—I need not tell you about your Duke. He is a Duke, to be sure, because his father was one, which is meritorious; but the father became a Duke, not because he had done so great a thing as pick up a lady's feather, but because he knew how to wear a feather of his own. The rogue dressed himself into a dukedom. Of scandals I say nothing. Stick we to real achievements. Fielding married velvet-cap's sister, and so he became Earl Denbigh. St Albans is an Earl, because he married an old woman; and Orrery, because he was kind enough not to be able to kill us all in his friend Oliver's time. Then, Sir Winston Churchill hath an achievement, called a daughter; the Duke hath incorporated it into his own arms. You know 'Okey's little chaplain' (as they call him) who is so busy now? He has a title, and offices, and God knows how many thousand pounds besides, by reason of his being despised by everybody for a traitor and hypocrite; nor can even his five mistresses help him to a good name. But he is useful, you rogue; so we despise and pay him.

Now you are only innocent and agreeable, Ralph, and must needs have a conscience; and so you have an ill-paid little salary, on which you give pretty suppers. These however will get you into debt; so there are hopes of you. Nay, sir, I doubt you will be a very pretty rascal in time. Why didn't you have a mother of the name of Barlow, and get born over seas? You dance well enough. You might have been a Duke ere this, and not had a word to say for yourself; and then nobody would have grudged you the feathers of all the turtles in Christendom."

I had never seen Killigrew's serious face look so grim as it did now. He was a man of great wit and fancy, and of a life as little correct as any; but there was much vigour in his character. He would fain have seen us active men all the morning, and then paid us with jokes and wine the rest of the day. The whole family of the Killigrews were remarkable. They came, like the Bacons and Cecils, from one of the famous daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke. Sir Robert, the father, had abilities, and so had Sir Peter. There was Sir Robert's son, William, chamberlain to the Queen, a man of a sweet temper, of most entertaining though grave discourse, and a fine play-wright. Then came his brother Henry the doctor, another play-wright, since become a preacher, and an excellent one; such a one, like

Dr Earle, as would make any man in love with an established church, if all its preachers were as pleasant and charitable. And then there's my pretty Nanny, whom I have danced on my knee an hundred times; a born paintress and poetess, as I have heard Mr Hailes and Mr Dryden both testify, and with a temper as sweet as a nut. This is the Doctor's daughter. Finally, not to mention Captain Harry, my friend's son, whose father let him run riot, out of a notion that such indulgence was kind and did good in the end—(and Hal had plenty both of wit and wildness, God knows)—there was the wittiest of them all, Tom Killigrew, of ever facetious memory, my friend himself; upon the very strength of whose Christian name, every Tom seems to take himself for a pleasant fellow. The public had a notion that he was a mere droll and buffoon, and they dubbed him "King's jester." He said more good things, grave as well as gay, and gave the King more good advice, than any man who came near him, except Earle and Southampton (for Clarendon spoilt his admonitions with his pride, and lay open to too many quips in the stomach.) The story of Killigrew's jest about Cromwell has been ill told. He did not go into the King's presence, dressed like a pilgrim; upon which the King cried out, "How now!"—and then there was a fine ready-made answer, and such

like mechanical nonsense. Tom did not prepare his jokes in that way, nor hazard the looking like a fool. The truth is this. There was a masquerade, in which Tom was dressed like a pilgrim. It was at a time when there was a very general sense of the ill posture of affairs, and a strong regret that the King would not apply his own abilities to the settlement of them. A group of the masqueraders were talking of it, and Tom had been so moved by what was said, that on the King's coming up and breaking the circle, his Majesty who was dressed like a knight-errant, asked him, "Well, Pilgrim, whither goest?" "To hell," said Killigrew, between jest and anger. "What for?" quoth the King. "To get Oliver, the scoundrel, to come and do business for us, since honest men will not mind it for themselves." There was a sudden silence, which made the King pause in his laughter; but he recovered in a moment, hit Tom on the shoulder with his glove, and said,—“Don't tell the King; or he'll bid you go for a fool.” It was in a similar spirit, a year or two afterwards, that he said another thing which has become public. Mr Cowley told me he overheard it himself, to his great surprise and admiration. The King, vexed with a report that was just brought him of some cunning projects that had failed, was saying that he began to be of my Lord Bacon's opinion; namely, that

open ways were the best in politics as well as journeys; and that for aught that he saw to the contrary, the simple men, as they called them, outwitted the double-dealers. He had a mind to send for this person and that,—meaning some friends of the late Bishop of Salisbury. “If you are for a simple man, sir,” said Killigrew, “I know as shrewd a simpleton as any going, and one that would serve your Majesty’s turn, better than any you have named, provided his occupation permitted him.” “What may that be?” said the King. “Love-making, sir. He is a common love-maker, one Charles Stuart; but so witty, that whenever I see him, I long to make him King of England.” “Pshaw!” said Charles, “I believe my people think I could spin the globe, if I would.—And so, Mr Cowley,” said he, turning to the poet, “Sir William Temple is right, and the pome-water, for the true hortulan culture, as Mr Evelyn has it, far surpasses the queening?” And hereupon his Majesty fell into a profound discourse on pippins.

These freedoms with the King were of old standing. There was a pleasant story of old Lord Cottington, which Hyde has been heard to relate, and the particulars of which were told me by a gentleman who was on the spot. The King, during his stay abroad, was going to make Mr Wyndham Secretary of State, for no better reason than that

his mother had been the royal nurse. Cottington went to his Majesty, and begged his attention for a few moments to the merits of a worthy person of his acquaintance, for whom he had to solicit a favor.

"Let us have 'em, my Lord," said the King, "and you know if I can oblige the man, I will. It is not money, I hope?"

"Nay, sir, had it been money," answered the Lord Treasurer, "I should have begged a little for myself, to give some colour to my title, not to mention other reasons, which (God be praised) occasionally make everybody merry, but the baker. It is a much lighter matter on which I come to your Majesty, though of great importance to the poor man."

"Who is he, Cottington?" returned the King: "a poor man not wanting money, is a marvel I would fain be acquainted with. He is the only wild fowl of his species, and must partake of the nature of the bird of paradise; which, they say, lives upon air. Pray let him take me along with him."

"Your Majesty," resumed Cottington, "has hit wonderfully upon two points in the man's fortune; one that concerns his present estate; and one, that touches, it is to be hoped, upon his future. Sir, it is of Mr Wood, an old falconer of his late Majesty, whose humble petition I have now to make known

to you. He is a man extremely well versed in his art, having followed it from his youth upwards, to the great content of his late blessed Majesty, and, I believe I may add, of his Majesty's successor."

"Old Wood!" said the King, "I knew him well; and a good brisk old fellow he was. He would toss up a lure in a second, that one might have taken for a partridge oneself."

"Well, sir, he can do as much now. I do not believe there is a man of his art breathing, who is better acquainted with the quality and mettle of his hawks, or more thoroughly experienced in all which they affect, or whatsoever suits their individual natures. He seems to know what sort of relish to give their food, by the very feel of their beaks under his finger."

"He must be a proper falconer indeed," said the King.

"Truly is he, sir; and as his knowledge, so is his care. No man waters or bathes his hawks with more—I had almost said,—fatherly attention; nor feeds, and looks to their cleaning, with a more happy result."

"Nay he's something like the son of a hawk, if you come to that," said Charles. "His own beak, I suppose, by one of Sir Kenelm's sympathies, helps him to a knowledge and consideration of all other beaks."

“A shrewd quip, i’faith,” said Cottington, laughing; “and a pity it is that Sir Kenelm, with his stately discourses, heard it not. But, sir, to be serious with regard to this poor man: money is not his most pressing want; if it were, he would forego the mention of it, like a good subject; but he is mightily desirous of being serviceable to your Majesty in another way; and therefore, in pursuance of what I have partly stated, I must add, that there is not a better caterer or coper of his birds, ’twixt this and the Land’s End; none that can cut a pounce with a more masterly nicety, or better provide against dulness and overgrowth in the beak. He is, furthermore, one of those who scorn to have too many fowls on hand, being as active as a youth in taking them in due season; and for reclaiming and keeping his hawks on the fist, I never met, not only with his equal, but with any man who could stand by him.”

“Well, my Lord,” said the King, “I know your love of the sport, and fully credit your zeal in behalf of the fowler; and now what is it I am to do? for you know, these are not the times or places for adding to the list of our servants; nine-tenths of whom, as it is, have nothing to do.”

“’Tis true, sir,” replied Cottington, “but if your Majesty will pardon my zeal in behalf of an old brother sportsman, to whom I have been

indebted for many a day's jollity, I may take the freedom of reminding you, that there is a vacancy in the list of your Majesty's chaplains, the filling up of which with the name of my honest friend, would make the poor man happy for life."

"The list of chaplains, my Lord Treasurer!" exclaimed the King: "surely—I would not stand upon niceties—but a chaplain and a falconer—"

"Forgive me, dear my liege," interrupted Cottington, with imperturbable gravity, "but knowing your liberality in such matters, and hearing from persons of good credit, that your Majesty was about to confer the secretaryship of state on worthy Mr Wyndham, I thought I would make a bold face, and lose no time in endeavouring at some preferment for the no less deserving Mr Wood. He will soon learn to read, if in truth he does not possess that accomplishment already, for I think I have seen him perusing an almanack: and in the progress of a few days, I doubt not he will be quite as able to further your Majesty's interests in the way I speak of, as Mr Wyndham in his more exalted station."

The King, at this discourse, is said to have looked more disconcerted than he had shown himself on more trying occasions. He blushed, then laughed, then blushed again, and finally settled the pretensions of both Mr Wyndham and Mr Wood,

by observing, "Odsfish! my Lord, you have dealt me a hard knock; but I suppose it was out of love, seeing that I was going to do a foolish thing; and so I'll not be so foolish as to persist in it. No more on't, an you love me. And now I mind me, Cottington, the Chancellor and I mean to come and dine with you to-morrow, in order to drink to all our reformatations."

This was a hit at Cottington, for his reputation of being but a poor host, not very willing to bring out his wine; but as he was an attentive good servant, more willing to entertain his master than any one else, and above all, was a man of great shrewdness and wit, and very apt to be in the right, all went merrily the next day; especially as the King had the pleasure of seeing both his Chancellor and his Treasurer, the two sages of his court, all but under the table.

To return to my narrative. Killigrew, though an honest fellow, may perhaps have spoken of some of these titled gentlemen with a degree of bitterness, in consequence of his having no title himself. He had followed the King in his fortunes, for better, for worse, and surely deserved it more than half the knights whom his Majesty created; but I have observed more than once, that if people will gratify kings for nothing, they are in general very readily permitted to do so. Tom said nothing about it, and Tom he remained. I will not swear

that the King did not wince a little sometimes ; and that those who expect titles of any sort, had better deal in nothing but praises ; that is to say, unless they are considerable enough to be of use in the way of money, or to commit high treason. Be this as it may, Tom did not make an end by pelting his Majesty with libels, as some did. He had an excuse as well as a hit for him, to the last.

I was much comforted by what Killigrew said, touching the subject of achievements ; but still I did not feel so confident as I had done ; and it was with great relief that I heard of volunteers going to sea against the Dutch, and that I might be one of them. The King gave me his permission. Lord Arran spoke to the Duke himself about it, and I was enrolled immediately among his Highness's volunteers, so that I might be considered, for the time, as belonging to his court. I thought that Buckingham did not like it. His Grace indulged in his usual raillery on the subject. Sir George Hewit happened to be with him.

“ Why, what has made thee in such a hurry, Ralph, to get shot ? ” said the Duke. “ Has thy mistress put a sugar-plumb in somebody else's mouth ? or hast thou discovered, that she grows fat in thine absence ? ”

I said that I wished to be stirring, and get a name, like other young men.

“ What, like Scipio Africanus ? ” returned Buck-

ingham. "Or like a puppy, that scampers about," quoth Sir George, "and is called Frisk! Comprehend me, Ralph," continued the Baronet; "I mean not to speak offensively; but to shew thee the superfluouſness of thy excessive love of action."

The Duke's reference to the noble Roman had a double meaning: for Lady Castlemain had a black footboy, whom they called Scipio Africanus, famous for hopping with a salver hither and thither, as if he was frightened.

I shall set myself more on a level with these gentry, thought I, by a lift in my fortunes; and then will I speak like one of the ancient stock of the Eshers. For the present, I was content to parry their facetiousness, with a philosophy that could have cut their throats.

"Nay," said the Duke, "far be it from me to obstruct thy cognomen. The Eshers are to vacate, eh? and thou rejectest the other ancients. Well; as thou art too modest to share with the African, thou shalt be called Ranulphus Batavinus."

"Keep the Dutch off," said Sir George, "and no appellation will be too great for daring to defile thy fingers with the tarpaulins. There have been herrings in the atmosphere during the whole of this east wind: so thou hast no time to lose."

"All the perfumes of Amboyna," said the Duke, getting into his favorite parodies, "will not sweeten

them, by this hand ! No, they the rather—what is it Esher ?—will

‘ The multitudinous seas Batavianise,
Making the salt, one herring-pond.’ ”

“ ’Tis marvellous to me,” quoth Sir George, “ how they can have the face to fight with gentlemen. ’Tis like a parcel of cheesemongers rampant ! an insurrection of chandlers’ shops ! I hope you go to war, with your Hungary water in your hand.”

“ I am afraid,” said I, “ Opdam is hardly devil enough to tack about for a perfume, even if it were *eau-d’ange*. Van Tromp, my Lord, did not care for a smelling-bottle, when he cracked Blake’s cabin-windows.”

“ Ah, but they had no perfumes in Cromwell’s time,” returned Hewit ; “ the experiment has never been tried. I remember when I was a boy, I used to hear a man in a little black cap read out of a great book ; and then I heard something about an angel, who put a devil to flight with an odour.”

“ Yes, but ’twas a fish odour,” said the Duke ; “ the very thing with which these heavy cherubim are coming against us.”

“ So it was,” replied Sir George, “ I have the cursedest memory :—well,” continued the Baronet, (who like a proper sovereign coxcomb, affected a

bantering superiority to the follies he cultivated) "if I had the settling of this affair, most certainly I should not think of troubling myself with the Dutch watermen. I should send the constable, water-bailiff, or what d'ye call him, to tell 'em to go."

Hereupon Sir George showed his white teeth; and all of us being set on our ease by the humanity of a laugh, I took the opportunity of merging my own soreness in some new satires that had lately appeared against these offensive people the Dutch. I asked his Grace if he had seen the two new pieces by Mr Marvell and Mr Butler.

"No," said he; "what are they, Ralph? where are they?"—all impatience at a new scent.

I produced them. Buckingham sat down on the lower bench, (it was in the court bowling-green,) and read them aloud, interrupting himself with fits of laughter. Sir George manifested a more tranquil extacy. Butler's was a description of Holland, representing the territory of their High Mightinesses, as

"A country that draws fifty foot of water,
In which men live as in the hold of nature;
A land that rides at anchor, and is moored;
In which they do not live, but go aboard;
Feeding, like cannibals, on other fishes,
And serve their cousin-germans up in dishes."

“Rare ! rare !” cried the Duke, “I should like to have a bout at it with him. The Dutch are a fine subject. They cut up like whales :

‘Feeding, like cannibals, on other fishes,
And serve their cousin-germans up—’ ”

and then he could not proceed for laughing. “I think I see the Dutchman opposite a John Dory ! rolling about, and staring, with his friend the Porpus !”

“Damme !” said Hewit (for he affected much that new mincing way of swearing) “ ’tis very convulsive. Mr Butler is droll to the last degree, when he is not stupid : I mean, when you can get him to speak ; which is not to be done without a deal of sherry.”

“That is a part of the judgment, George, for which he is so famous,” said the Duke.

“I mean it so. ’Tis pity his judgment is not equally nice in his apparel. The dog has the most insipid coat and breeches. The first time I was introduced to him, I thought they had brought me before a clerk of the peace.”

“Listen, listen,” cried Buckingham ; “here is Andrew, better still : nobody like my Saint, for full measure, pressed down, and running over :—

‘Holland, that scarce deserves the name of land,
As but the off-scouring of the British sand,

And so much earth as was contributed
By English pilots, when they heave the lead,
Or what by th' ocean's slow alluvion fell,
Of shipwreck'd cockle, and the muscle-shell,—
This ort and muddy refuse of the sea
Fell to the Dutch by just propriety.

' Glad then, as miners who have found the ore,
They, with mad labour, fish'd the land to shore;
And div'd as desperately for every piece
Of earth, as though it had been of ambergreece;
Collecting anxiously small loads of clay,
Less than what building swallows bear away,
Or than those pills which sordid beetles roll,
Transfusing into them their dunghill soul.

' How did they rivet with gigantic piles
Thorough the centre their new-catched miles,
And to the stake a struggling country bound,
Where barking waves still bait the forced ground!
Building their watery Babel far more high
To reach the sea, than those to scale the sky.

' Yet still his claim the injured ocean laid
And oft at leap-frog o'er their steeples play'd;
As if on purpose it on land had come
To shew them what's their *mare liberum*.
A daily deluge over them does boil;
The earth and water play at level-coyl.
The fish oft-times the burgher dispossess'd,
And sat, not as a meat, but as a guest;
And oft the Tritons, and the sea-nymphs, saw
Whole shoals of Dutch serv'd up for Cabillau;
Or as they over the new level rang'd,
For pickled herring, pickled heeren chang'd.

Nature, it seemed, ashamed of her mistake,
 Would throw their land away at duck and drake ;
 Therefore necessity, that first made kings,
 Something like government among them brings.
 For, as with pigmies, who best kills the crane,
 Among the hungry, he that treasures grain,
 Among the blind the one-ey'd blinkard reigns,
 So rules among the drowned, he that drains.
 Not who first sees the rising sun, commands ;
 But who could first discern the rising lands.
 Who best could know to pump an earth at leak,
 Him they their lord, and country's father, speak.
 To make a bank, was a great plot of state :
 Invent a shov'l, and be a magistrate.'''

In reading these lines the Duke exhibited a transport, inconceivable perhaps to any one not accustomed to similar exercises of the fancy. He rolled, he thumped his knee, he ran into high tenuityes of voice, and sometimes could not get out the last three or four words of a couplet. "New catched miles," said he whining—"a struggling country," and then stopped in an extacy:—

"Invent a shovel, and be a magistrate."

"George !" cried he, giving Hewit a clap on the shoulder,—“write a line like that, and coats and breeches be d—d.”

The excess of this transport enabled the beau

to retain his self-possession. The louder the Duke grew, the more Hewit contrived to mingle his approbation of the verses with a laughing astonishment at the reader's extravagance.

"'Tis very suffocating," cried he;—"I know not if a man has a right to threaten a Duke's life so far. And Mr Esher here; he is *particeps criminis*. You see, Mr Esher, what you have done to the ducal œsophagus."

I said, that I knew his Grace would go as great lengths as any man for a high and princely satisfaction; which I took such raptures to be; and that if the Duke died of wit, it would be in his own cause."

"Thanks, Esher," cried Buckingham: "'tis well said, i'faith;" and his Grace recovered his breath, and was now as much disposed to praise me, as he had been to rally. Such power has the least shadow of a pleasant speech, to do away an ill feeling of the moment, in the complacency it produces, both in the giver and receiver.

But I had not lost all desire of vengeance nevertheless; so, basely making common cause with the more powerful, I contrived, as I withdrew, to leave a savage sting in the delicate gloved hands of Sir George. He was launching out into a sudden panegyric on the French, as contrasted with the Dutch; when pretending not

to hear him, and to be on the wing towards my provider of naval stores, I drew from my pocket another satire by Mr Butler, which had just escaped on the town; observing, that it had hardly yet been shewn, but to his most intimate friends. The Duke snatched it out of my hand, and fell to reading it aloud, while I was bowing off. It was entitled ‘On our ridiculous Imitations of the French,’ and, together with many others of Mr Butler’s pieces, has not yet been given to the world, to the great defrauding of his fame, of which they are quite worthy.* I have unfortunately lost both this and two other copies; but I remember it began—

“ Who would not rather get him gone
Beyond the intolerablest zone,
Or steer his passage through those seas
That burn in flames, or those that freeze,
Than see one nation go to school,
And learn of another, like a fool?
To study all its tricks and fashions,
With epidemic affectations,

* Several of the pieces here alluded to, and this particular one among them, have since made their appearance under the title of ‘Genuine Remains of Samuel Butler.’ They are, as our Author says, quite worthy of the fame of that great wit, and perhaps are calculated to give more pleasure to the general reader than *Hudibras* itself.—*Edit.*

And dare to wear no mode or dress,
But what they in their wisdom please ;
As monkees are, by being taught
To put on gloves and stockings, caught."

Then there were jests about coats and breeches, and

"—— hats sometimes like pyramids,
And sometimes flat like pipkins' lids ;
With broad brims sometimes, like umbrellas,
And sometimes narrow as Punchinello's."

Then came a shrewd touch, which Sir George
must have felt to his fingers' ends;

" And as some puppies have been known
In time to put their tutors down,
So ours are often found t' have got
More tricks than ever they were taught ;
With sly intrigues and artifices
Usurp their ailments and their vices ;
With garnitures upon their shoes
Make good their claim to gouty toes ;
And lest they should seem destitute
Of any mange that's in repute,
And be behindhand with the mode,
Will swear they're ' all but dead, by G—d ;'
By sudden starts, and shrugs, and groans,
Pretend to shootings in the bones ;
To cuts and torments : and lay trains
To prove a weakness in the reins."

Then followed some admirable banter on the

other shrugs and grimaces of these gentlemen; on their "wearing their very limbs" after a fashion; assuming a right to decry everything, as if knowledge consisted, not in knowing, but in despising; and finally, in affecting to lard their English with French, a charge to which Hewit was specially obnoxious.—I could not help turning round to look, as I walked away; and I caught the Duke's eye, who shook his fist at me, as much as to say, "You rascal!"—continuing to read, nevertheless. Sir George had shifted his posture, so that his back was towards me; but I saw him stooping close down to Buckingham, as if pretending an anxiety to hear; and in his right hand he twirled a glove.

CHAPTER XI.

SIR GEORGE'S objections to the Dutch might not be very statesman-like, and yet I could never understand that our reasons for going to war with them, were much better founded. In fact, for all that I observed afterwards, (for I thought nothing about it at the time) I believe that our peruked and polished Court hated them as much for being money-getters and "vulgar merchants," as anything else. Vulgar merchants was a phrase made use of by Lauderdale. Without a king, and without ladies of the bed-chamber, the Dutch pretended, nevertheless, to be somebody: they had rivalled us at sea; and Charles had no very agreeable recollections of the time he passed in their neighbourhood. Clarendon disliked them for having no literature and bishops; and Buckingham for their beer and fat women. We felt with regard to them, much as a gentleman of an old family

would feel towards a citizen who should set up a mansion in his neighbourhood, and affect a voice in the county. They had been servants to Spain; but though we hated the Spaniard, yet the latter was a man of birth; and his factor, notwithstanding his right to leave him, had no right to strut about in slops, with a little hat and tobacco-pipe, on the same *pavé*. The Most Christian King, who lived on the other side of the intruder, had the same feeling towards him, though, like ourselves, he was fain to league with him now and then, to hinder a predominance in the parish; as he was doing at at this present time. Etheridge, afterwards Sir George, who was hardly less a fop than his namesake, called the Dutch (by a new figure of speech, and punning on their canals) the *Canaille par impudence*. "The vulgar dogs!" said he, "they have not a friend in the world, but the sugar-bakers."

Our fleet thought to get to sea in March, but we were not out till the beginning of May. Having the good fortune to be in the Duke's own ship, I was in excellent company; and being young, and in good health and condition, the newness of everything was delightful, till we had foul weather. The sea air made us as hungry as hunters; we already began to get brown and ruddy, which made us anticipate the admiration of the ladies, forget-

ting that we might have no heads to be admired with; and with the exception of female company, all our old habits were joined with our new, which made a delicious mixture:—the tender played their guitars; and the rough, as if the fighting they were going to have was not mustard enough to their beef, had a main of cocks; having brought some poor devils on board for that purpose. It was piteous to see the gallant birds drenched with salt water after being torn with their spurs; and but poor relief to be told that it was “good for them.” I thought some of the old seamen did not like it. These men were the best specimens I had seen of the old republicans;—stout-hearted, steady fellows, as immoveable-looking as the bulks they leaned on, and as quiet, till circumstances roused them. Some of them looked even meek, and had meek voices; and the tranquillity and neatness of their operations, contrasted with the prodigiousness of their fists, formed a spectacle which I never beheld without a kind of awe. Their “Ay, ay, sir,” when the master bade them do anything, seemed as if it was not to be gainsaid, had he bade them go through a rock. While we read the last new comedy, they read the Bible. Going one night to take a message to the watch, I found a party of them sitting at the stern, talking of old times

One of them in a low, but firm voice, gave out the Psalm—

“ This spacious earth is all the Lord’s,”

which they sang in a like manner, “ not to disturb the gentlefolks.” I thought of my father, and was glad to find myself joined in the same cause with his old comrades. Otherwise there was something in all this, that would have disturbed me. I had just come out of the Duke’s cabin, where his Highness, in what I must call his very unpleasant cold manner, had been telling a gay story to Lord Falmouth; and coming thus suddenly upon a party so different, the other for the first time seemed a kind of impertinence. It was a fine night, after some hard weather, but without a moon; and as the stars shone innumerable over head, and the dark bodies of the ships were seen hulling around us, the psalm had a communion with the greatness of the scene, such as made it a pain to me to go down again. I thought of poor Mr Saunders and my mother, and found I knew not what novel sort of strength in a feeling of weakness.

These impressions, of which my early education had left me not incapable, I would not have mentioned for a good deal to most of my friends on board. Their different breeding would not have

known what to make of them; nor indeed did my new breeding allow them to remain long upon myself; but they affected me so much at the time, that I imparted the secret to one person, whom I had become intimate with on board, and who speedily became the friend of my heart.

This was the stranger I overheard talking to Lord Arran, the night of the exhibition of little Nelly. He was called Sir Philip Herne. He was at that time a pale-looking young man, seemingly not above five-and-twenty, though he was nearer thirty. He was perfectly well made and genteel, with a profusion of brown locks like silk, and eyes as blue as the heavens. His paleness was not healthy. He suffered under severe head-aches, which gave him a habit of knitting his brow; and the sourness of this look over his eyes, contrasted with the sweetness of the lower part of his face, produced a remarkable expression, which upon the whole was very becoming. His forehead was the largest I had ever seen, with the exception of Captain Sandford's. They were about of a size; a great deal too large, I thought, for handsomeness (my own, between ourselves, being the true thing in that respect); but the brow of Sir Philip was well adorned with his locks: Sandford's was bare, and had a look of effrontery. Besides, the more I thought of the two men, the less this piece

of common property redounded to the Captain's advantage; it brought the rest of their faces into comparison; and together with the suspicions I began to entertain of Buckingham's acquaintance, made me call to mind differences I had but lightly noted before. Sandford, it is true, might be called handsome. He had regular, well-proportioned features, and a colour in his cheeks; and his insinuating manners completed the favourable impression made by his appearance, as long as you did not see him in repose. There was then something equivocal in his aspect; something which the occasional evidences that escaped him of a temperament of suppressed violence, made you call to mind afterwards, rather than notice at the time; though it is true I might never have thought of it, but for the Duke and Mr Braythwaite. There was a trouble in his brow, as well as in Sir Philip's; but, I now thought, of a very different character; and in the rest of his face there was a kind of bloated prominence, or rather burliness, (for it did not look disease) which combined, in a singular degree, laxity with determination. His features seemed to hang on the look-out for some daring enterprise. Sir Philip's countenance was as different in this respect, as refinement from grossness. His features were not so regular as Sandford's, but none of them were coarse; and his look was that

of thoughtfulness and endurance, prepared for action, rather than given to it.

This is an after criticism, the result of long acquaintance; and there may be nothing in it; though it singularly corresponded with events. Perhaps, even in this sentence, I am confounding prophecy with retrospection. But I have known more than one ingenious person, (Sir Philip was one of them) who suspected that there was much in the faces of men, beyond what the world supposed. There is a tendency among all classes to draw judgments of character from the countenance; the passions speak loudly in it; and probably in this as in every other case, if we know a little, we may be pretty certain that there is a great deal more to be learnt.

I had been introduced the day before to Sir Philip Herne by my namesake Ralph Montagu (afterwards so great a man, and ambassador.) "Sir Philip," said he, "here is a gentleman desirous of the honour of your acquaintance upon a ground very remarkable, considering he is one of the court. He has fallen in love with your regard for the truth." I explained; and Sir Philip, smiling on the sudden, and looking as open and gay as he had before been thoughtful, accepted my hand with an air as if I had conferred an obligation upon him. This extreme change of countenance was

peculiar to him. It would not so well have become a less sincere man, nor indeed is usually an indication of sincerity. But the alteration, in his case, was owing to the very truth of his feelings. He was always the same in temper, but his thoughts were apt to be as remote and grave as his inclinations were social; so that when he suddenly smiled and opened in this manner, it was from delight on finding his thoughts called pleasantly home.

Persons of an ingenuous temper, when they give an explanation, are apt to wander into others. At the end of our first evening's acquaintance, I found, not without some misgiving, that I had related my whole history, short of the secrets I was bound to keep, and one or two others which I instinctively kept back. Sir Philip however discerned that I had been retentive, as well as communicative. He asked me bluntly, if I did not pique myself on keeping a secret. I said yes; and he turned upon me (it was in walking the deck) with one of his delightful smiles, observing, "I am some years older than you, and have seen more trouble. Will you allow me to say, that I have been long looking for a disposition like your's, and that your friendship, if I may reckon upon deserving it, will be a greater good to me than I can express?"

I cannot say how pleased I was at his thus more than meeting me half way. "I have a story," con-

tinued Sir Philip, "to relate in turn; but I will not do it this moment, because it is a melancholy one, such as does not suit preparations for battle; and I am willing to avoid telling it by word of mouth. Should a bullet take it into its head to be uncivil (for there is no settling the mathematics of those gentry, or saying—Let A B be your right line) you will find, in a red trunk with my name on it, a packet sealed and tied up, and directed to yourself. Nay, you may well be surprised; but I speak, not of what is, but what is to be, for I shall write the direction forthwith, and fill up some vacancies. I was going to take the freedom of addressing it to another person, who has done me the honour of encouraging confidences on my part; but perhaps he might condescend to be vexed, at missing a paper which he would hope to see in company with it; and I should also have to make a more peremptory injunction on a certain point, than his dignity would perhaps think quite proper, even with a dead man's apologies."*

I had observed that my friend (for so I may already venture to call him) scarcely ever dilated on any topic, even when it was a sorrowful one,

* There is a mystery here, which is not explained. I suspect it alludes to an attempt of the Duke of York to convert him. But the passage is still perplexing.—*Edit.*

without shewing a vein of pleasantry, which completely put me out in my speculations respecting grave people. Certainly Mr Saunders had exhibited no such vein; my mother had nothing of it. Captain Sandford gave way to it once and away, in a phrase or so, but not comfortably; and Mr Braythwaite's pleasantry was anything but pleasant. I had taken the inmates of the court, and such as resembled them, for the only persons to whom a strain of lively remark was natural. Gravity of reflection appeared to be something incompatible with levity of speech. A different story had been told me of Bishop Earle; but him I had never the pleasure of hearing in private; and the wit of South, Lord Clarendon's chaplain, whom I had once been taken to hear, I could not regard as belonging to a serious character. I could never take even Morley for a proper bishop. Doubtless my first impressions had influenced me in this matter. South turned out serious enough; that is to say, he was a morose, violent, discontented man of no very understood principles; and he has profited so little from age, that having become, not long ago, one of the royal chaplains, he did not scruple to curry favour in the coarsest manner with Charles, by speaking scurrilously before him of the republican master he had

flattered. The King said he should be a bishop for it; but his Majesty's failures in his word are not seldom on the right side.

But I digress. Suffice it to say, that I have since learnt better; though in consequence of my intimacy with that mixed temperament of my friend's, in which sociality of disposition gave a playful turn of discourse to his very melancholy, I afterwards ran the hazard of setting down every one of a lively conversation for being melancholy at heart.

To proceed with my narrative. "You will find," continued Sir Philip, "two packets within the envelope; one addressed to a person into whose hands you will be kind enough to deliver it yourself, in case I—(here his voice faltered a little)—you understand me;—the other is for the bearer of the packet, whoever he should turn out to be, which is now the friend beside me; and this will make you acquainted with my story. I have only to add, that if I am as alive and in good case, as there is no reason why I should not be, as well as others, you shall still read the manuscript addressed to you, because it will save me some painful repetitions; and in either case, whether I am my own conveyor of letters or not, you must promise me not to say a word of their contents, as long as the other person I speak of

(his accents here were still more disturbed)—is an inhabitant of this strange beautiful world ; so beautiful and so discordant.”

I expressed my sense, in due terms, of the confidence Sir Philip reposed in me ; and seeing that he had spoken thus sorrowfully, in spite of himself, I took the liberty of giving a turn, without violence, to the discourse. The world, I said, was disordant enough, in all conscience, as we were all of us about to show ; “ but are we quite sure, Sir Philip, that you and I have a right to complain, just now, of its want of harmony ? Do we not resemble musicians, who instead of bearing their parts properly, and sustaining the previous counterpoint, should go counter with a vengeance, and commence cracking their violins on each other’s heads ? ”

“ ’Tis something like it,” answered Sir Philip ; “ and yet there is a conscience even in the breaking of heads. If violins must in the nature of things be cracked, it is as well that the destruction should be performed by those who can crack them, as Hewit would say, in the genteelest manner. You know they say that a violin, like a wit, is sometimes the better for being cracked ; so we must hope that humanity itself sometimes acquires a better tone from the like accidents. The process is a little hazardous ; nor, as Falstaff says, can he

reap much benefit from it, 'who died a Wednesday.' But at all events, we can break heads in the most reconciling manner, and be vastly civil and murderous, like the knights of old."

I mentioned the impression made upon me by the old seamen, and by the hymn they had sang. "They are fine fellows," said Herne, "and worthy of our respect; and yet these same men would probably be guilty of a sort and degree of violence, of which you have no conception. You have seen the chaplain we have on board. He is a very civil and a very religious man, and yet he hardly dares to get up before those quiet persons on a Sunday morning, because he is suspected to be half a papist. Between you and me (and I have the Duke's warrant for mentioning it to whom I please in case of accidents, though I can hardly think it discreet in his Highness to have brought the man hither) there is another person more than suspected of being a papist, whom you will see on all occasions standing at a few paces distance from the Duke. He is very dark, and speaks broken English; and a very worthy man he is. But he is a popish priest in disguise. He became passionately attached to the Duke's service, when he was abroad; for which reason his Highness says he has not the heart to keep him away; so a few of us, who have warrants to com-

mission others, have a charge to keep an eye on him, in case the seamen come to the knowledge of the secret, and appear inclined to do him a mischief. I tell you this, because I am sure you would willingly join in saving the poor man under such circumstances, especially as the Duke has very properly given orders, that he is only to be rescued and defended, and on no account is a hair of the seamans' heads to be touched. Whether such nicety could be observed by everybody in case of a scuffle, is to be doubted; but you and I would surely be among the punctilious; and in fact, I have told the secret but to one other individual. I am to be stationed near his Highness's person, and I will contrive that you shall be so too."

The discourse then fell upon war and fighting, upon which Sir Philip made remarks of a nature I had never heard before. The declamations of Mr Saunders I used to regard as something official and gratuitous; he did not, or would not, see any fair play; all was on the side of meekness and submission, except where certain opinions were concerned, which put the doctrine to the test. He was for fighting and not fighting: in short, I could not tell what to make of him. Unfortunately he was of a weakly habit, and saw discord and bad passions where a sanguine youth like myself could

discern nothing but sport or a scuffle ; so that his peace-makings I set down to the account of his ill health, while his departures from them in favour of the godly, seemed convincing proofs what a desperate fellow he would have been, if he had had but a good digestion.

Now these reflections were familiar to the mind of Sir Philip ; I should rather say that it was he who first made me conscious of them myself. He did justice to both sides of the question ; and he talked so well upon it, that seeing me look graver than usual, and retaining my gravity for upwards of a dozen remarks, he broke off, and said with vivacity, " Pretty fellows we, to sit here like a couple of gownsmen, arguing upon questions which a little action reduces to nothing ! Suppose we try to square the circle of the first bullet ! " He then talked of music, of painting, of the last new comedy, and told me a hundred amusing anecdotes of the state of things at court during his Majesty's exile, having been there on his tour. It was of him I learnt the story of Lord Cottington.

The weather, which had threatened us once or twice, was now growing boisterous. Not meeting with the Dutch, we had gone to look for them on their own coast ; where we beheld them accordingly, at anchor in the Texel ; but the same wind that opposed their coming out, treated us so

roughly, that after some of our masts had gone by the board, we were fain to go back to Gunfleet, and refit. Never heard I in my life such an infernal noise as our great gawky ship made, tumbling about like a whale full of machinery. The bulks, the barrels, the chains, the rolling guns, the creaking of the timbers, the buffeting of waves, the shrieking, rattling, and thundering of winds, shrouds, and sails; the grunting of swine, the higher remonstrances of the poultry, the banging of the ship, fore, aft, and sideways; the digs it received, now in the sides, and now on the decks; its tossing and plunging, like a wild camel; and in short, all the uproar made by it and against it, as if the sea laboured with it like a vexation, and both struggled in the abhorrence, composed altogether such a dance with music to it, as deafened us the minor performers, and forced us to sprawl about, as we could, in desperate acquiescence. However, we were very merry. Sir Philip had a jest for every discomfort. Ralph Montagu drew comparisons between a ship in a tempest and the luxuries of Whitehall; and Horton took out a license to abuse the Duke for seducing us all to sea, on purpose to have gentlemen to *slide* by him in his adversity.

It was not pleasant somehow (I own it) to go out to fight, and be baulked of one's first heat; nei-

ther did this new taste of the salt water make it pleasanter. Volunteers, however resolute, are not old seamen. But a rest of two or three days at Gunfleet, and a burst of fine weather, restored our young blood to its thoughtlessness. The pigs had shewn themselves of a more impatient turn. Some of them, who had got loose, jumped overboard, when at a good distance from shore, smitten with an *amor patriæ* above all our vaingloriousness. The boatswain screamed as he saw them going. It was a bad omen. "They will cut their throats," said he, "before their time, the wilful fools! I'd ha' given ten pieces it had not chanced." Horton asked him the reason. The man looked a little ashamed, superstitions of this kind being contrary to the new light he had received; but habit was too much for him. However, he was an Independent, and had a right to his opinion. "The ways of heaven," he said, "were so wonderful, and it had so often made use of the meanest of its creatures for a sign, and a symbol, and a testimony, that he had not altogether made up his mind to reject the least evidence of its doings in the great waters; where, mayhap, greater lights than himself had had occasion to see little." The greater lights on the other side had no reason to laugh at this reasoning. Our chaplain, who smiled at the pigs, had been kept awake the night previous by a death-watch; and the Duke himself, while lean-

ing over the gunwale with Lord Falmouth, and listening to a licentious story, was seriously disturbed at his Lordship's proceeding to whistle a gavot. Falmouth stopped suddenly, and with admirable address excused himself for having so far forgotten his *manners*. The Duke, smiling, pressed the good-natured Captain of his Guards on the shoulder. It was this obliging disposition of Lord Falmouth, and his happiness at giving a pleasant and accommodating turn to everything, which in unison with his great courage, made him a favourite with all the world.

At Gunfleet we had visitors from the other ships. Among the rest Lord Buckhurst came to see us, and who should follow but Sir George Hewit! We expressed our surprise at his thinking it worth his while to forego the society of the ladies, for so strange a spectacle as the Dutchmen.

"'Twas the strangeness of it," said he, "that drew me. I came to see whether it be possible for a Dutchman to think of facing the Duke's court. Nothing but ocular demonstration would satisfy me."

I now found true what I had not believed possible; to wit, that Buckingham had come to join the fleet, and gone back again, not having been put into a position, he said, worthy of his rank. We made no comments on this before Sir George, nor did he encourage us.

“ And with whom do you sail, Sir George?”

“ With Mons Acutus ; with Ned of the Peak, as Buckingham calls him ; I beg pardon, I mean with my gallant commander, my Lord Sandwich, Admiral of the Blue. He is the man for the Dutch ; do you know I left him playing the theorbo ?”

“ The guitar, somebody told us.”

“ Yes,” said Buckhurst, “ he has a guitar for soft evenings ; but he prefers the theorbo of a morning. We left him just now, in the fortieth year of his age, smiling East by North at the enemy, and singing a song called ‘ Beauty retire.’ ”

This produced a hearty laugh at his Lordship’s expense, and a volley of other jokes ; the commanders of ships in those days not being famous for speaking the best of one another.

“ Oh, but you mustn’t underrate my little Montagu,” interrupted Sir George, who felt the laugh going too far, and who called everybody ‘ little,’ in his endearments, though he might have been seven feet high. “ His Highness himself has shewn his princely countenance to the guitar, and has won victories with it before now, over persons of an extremely Dutch turn of mind, or their spouses are belied.”

The Duke of York laughed, and the scale was

turned in the Earl's favour. Sir George, however, could not resist a joke, even at the hazard of hurting his fopperies. He was really a pleasant good-natured man, with a strong sense of humour; and the present evidences of his courage gave a new air to his plumes.

"His Lordship," said he, "means to sing on deck; and the Dutch, out of mere astonishment at an elegance, are to retire. *Beauty* is to retire."

"He is the naval Tyrtæus," said Buckhurst; "it was, questionless, out of pure astonishment, that the Spartans of old were moved by the lute-playing schoolmaster from Athens. It must have been a confounding spectacle to see him riding down their ranks, wielding that new weapon. I vote that we all hold back, while his Lordship goes the round of the enemy's fleet, and tinkles them into humanity."

"Arion, Arion's the man," cried Hewit; "the Admiral, in case of the worst, will save himself, if he saves nobody else. He will ride to shore in triumph; and a Dutchman will be his dolphin."

We took a walk on shore to stretch our legs, or rather to steady them, and extend their line of action, the feeling of *terra firma* being pleasanter than any rest on board, even after so short a voyage. Some poor devils of seamen tried hard to go with us, especially one who had been lately pressed,

but they were not to be trusted. The boatswain's mate, however, went; charged to secure some pigs, to supply the loss of those which had jumped overboard. We saw him in Harwich, trying all the cottages in the suburbs. The boatswain had agreed to go shares towards the purchase, but he was equally decisive as to the impossibility of going any further than the sum mentioned, and the absolute necessity of getting the pigs; so that the man had a hard time of it. After all, he could not procure the whole number; which had a visible effect upon his officer's countenance. Doubtless he drew the most ominous presages.

We turned into an alehouse, to divert ourselves with the humours we should find there; but the room was nearly empty. A press-gang had swept the neighbourhood, to make up the complement of some of our vessels. The landlady was sulky, because her bills had not been paid; and, as the undress we were in hindered her from knowing what great folks had come to visit her, she seemed inclined to do nothing for us. Buckhurst gave her a crown, upon which she would have done anything; and a daughter made her appearance to wait on our honours.

We were paying the young lady some compliments on her beauty, to enhance the value of

which, she stood biting her lips, and mustering up all the seriousness of her habits of life, when a circumstance took place, which made me glad that I had told so much of my history to Sir Philip Herne.

On our first speaking to the landlady at the bar, I thought I saw a face inside the little room that was familiar to me. We had not been ten minutes in the house, talking of the girl who had just left us to bring some punch, and admiring the classical inscriptions on the wall and ceiling, when we heard a scuffle in the next room; and a little deformed fellow, known about the place for his loyalty and his drinking (the Duke having once chucked him a Jacobus) came in, holding another man by the skirts, whom he accused of "high treason!" The solemnity of the charge, delivered with a great deal of puffing and blowing, and by a huge-headed dwarf, half intoxicated, produced as much laughter as surprise. The traitor spoke in a mixed tone of ridicule and indignation. He tried hard to pluck his skirts out of the accuser's grasp: we bade him quit his hold, which he did, hearing as he said, we were "gentlemen volunteers to the Glorious Duke;" and Buckhurst, declaring himself a lord, and thereby constituting himself something that represented the whole body of

government, had the business in his hands to settle as he pleased. The mystery was soon explained.

It is too well known, that our seamen, always more famous for being a bold than a contented race (as indeed is but natural to men made such rough use of at one time, and forgotten at another) had particular reasons throughout the whole of the reign of merry King Charles for being braver and more grumbling than ever. Their bravery (which we received in capital condition from the republicans) was exercised by the Dutch; and their dissatisfaction, I must say, was most unremittingly kept alive by the perpetual want of money in our coffers. The irregular payment of a salary such as mine was nothing, at least I thought so at the time. I drew on my next year's income, and was amply reimbursed by one of his Majesty's gracious notices. But these would not keep the sailors in bread and clothes. His Majesty, who had a turn for naval affairs, would shew himself, now at Greenwich, and now at the Nore; and the sailors, delighted to see him among them, endeavoured to draw favourable omens for next quarter-day. The omens came to nothing, and the fleets threatened to do so likewise. Nobody knew how it was that we took so many prizes, and made visible so little money. Money was wanting for the men, men

were wanting for the ships: it was a marvel how we had got to sea this time; and even as it was, the Duke had had to send back some of his vessels, and put the press-gangs in motion. All this, and the gaieties at court, gave occasion to much talk and complaint; and everybody threw the blame on everybody else. The most extraordinary thing was, that the least popular were those who least deserved to be otherwise; I mean on the score of supplies; for though Hyde was too anxious to enrich his title, there would have been plenty of money, had every one been as prudent as he; whereas the King, who shewed himself ready to work like a sailor (had his call lain that way), and who certainly enjoyed himself like a sailor, was thought to have reason to complain as well as his subjects. There was no necessity why those who had the virtue, should have the money too; the monopoly was too great. It was at that time known to few, that his Majesty was becoming a pensioner of France; and the people, who saw him patting his dogs in the Park, or taking the rudder in hand when he went to Greenwich, beheld a man like one of themselves, and could not but believe that he would live and let live as much as anybody, if circumstances did not go crossly. After all, there was something in this philosophy, as I shall again have occasion to notice.

Our friend the dwarf entered loudly into these matters, but all on the loyal side, accusing his antagonist of doing directly the reverse, and calumniating the whole government, in mind, body, and estate. "I don't believe," said he, "there's a single gentleman or great lord in his sacred Majesty's court, whom he has not tarred from head to foot; and he makes out his most sacred Majesty to be the blackest devil of them all."

"A mere jest, my Lord," said the culprit; "your Lordship knows that his Majesty is a black man: I was only speaking of his face."

"His face!" cried the other, contemptuously, "you made him out to be as black as the black man himself, with a wannion to you; and by the same token, you called his ladies, his witches—ah, you may look;—and by the same token, now I think on't, you said the Duke of Buckingham was the only good man in the court, and would scorn to eat or drink if he was in the King's palace, till he saw every man jack in the navy paid. Now that's what I call 'high treason;' and with high treason I charge you, before Mrs Gosset and their noble Lordships."

I had by this time recognised the defendant for a man who had been in Mr Braythwaite's service; and as I did not much relish the meeting, I hoped to avoid his eye by keeping in the background;

but in the laughter which was occasioned by the mention of the Duke of Buckingham's goodness, my head and shoulders were left exposed, and the enemy seized upon me. Mrs Gossett, in her anxiety to save both the drinkers, and not without alarm at hearing these frightful words in her house about treason, especially before the noble volunteers, was setting forth, with a most uneasy smile of indifference, and many smoothings of her apron, how certain it was that there could have been nothing but a little mistake between the gentlemen; when the offender cried out, "I can settle the thing at once, my Lord. God be praised, I see noble Mr Esher behind your Lordship. He will speak for me. He has known my character these five years; I have served my worthy master, you know, sir, Mr Warmestre, for nearly that time, though sorry I am to say we have now parted; and your honour will bear witness for me, that I am an honest man."

I had, in truth, nothing to say against the man, except that I had not known him all that time, and that what little I did know I never suspected to be worth much; but I had no charges to bring, and therefore I thought proper to say nothing, except that I remembered him. The other fellow was a drunken fool; and so it was agreed by my lord the judge, that the case should be dismissed, on pay-

ment of a fine of ten shillings from each party for disturbing the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King by their mutual errors.

The accused party seemed not unwilling to get off so easily; the other stared and began to cry out, when Buckhurst, as the representative of his Majesty, settled the matter by declaring he would pay the fine himself, in order to shew how superior he was to such mistakes among the drunken part of his good people. "You," said he, "fellow," (to Braythwaite's servant) "clearly know nothing about us; and you, Signor Grosse-tête," (to the dwarf, who was looking triumphant,) "know less; so our hostess, the courteous Gossetia here, and her fair daughter, Eleonora, will see that ye be kept apart, and go about your respective ignorances." His Lordship then handed over the fine to the ladies, who with many thanks curtsied us to the door, the criminal seizing the opportunity to be off at another portal.

We took our way back to the vessel, lamenting that the court was no richer, and that the people were not without reasons for complaint. I thought proper to explain what I knew of the man who had been talking so boldly; Sir Philip, with his usual goodnature, enlarging on one or two points, to let them see that I had told him as much before. I was glad afterwards that this had been done; for

the suspicions I now began to entertain of Mr Braythwaite, as well as Captain Sandford, in regard to some connection with the Duke of Buckingham, not quite justifiable, turned out to be a great deal too lenient. Hewit said, that he understood the want of money was all owing to Penn and "the fanatics;" which was very absurd. When we came on board, Penn asked what news; we told him there was a complaint of want of money for the navy; upon which he said it was all owing to Monk. The truth was, there was everywhere a want of public credit. But we thought no more of all this in a few minutes, than we used to do at Whitehall. That night, however, I dreamt that Braythwaite was hung, and that when on the scaffold, he appealed to me for a character; upon which the mob all turned about and looked me in the face.

Our discourse was interrupted by the Duke, who, coming in smiling, with papers in his hand, told us we might expect the Duchess in an hour or two, her Royal Highness having taken occasion of his stoppage on the coast to come to see him.

Our delight may be imagined. We should see the ladies again, and there would be dancing and a feast. Durfort sung a chanson. Boyle skipped about like a young colt. Lord Falmouth looked as pleased as the Duke, but for a different reason.

Hewit looked at his cuff, and blew a feather off it. Montagu was very merry. Herne congratulated everybody, but did not seem very happy. Buckhurst was suddenly pensive. It was understood that he envied Falmouth his wife. As to Muskerry, he hoped his wife would not take it in her head to come; and his hope was gratified.

“Dear creatures!” cried Hewit, “how tender they will be! We shall see in their eyes the rewards of our glory, before we have ventured for it. I begin to think it will be better to cheat ’em, like the little boys; get the sugar first, and then reject the physic.”

In an hour or two, a salute from shore announced the arrival of the Duchess. It was weather fit for the occasion; warm as love, and blue as the ladies’ eyes. The ships were manned; the quarter-decks were hung with awnings of flags; and a thundering hurra from the whole fleet announced that her Royal Highness was coming. The Duke would have gone to fetch her, but she surprised him with sending word that she was setting off from the commissioner’s house, and he had only time to dispatch Harman with the boat.

Imagine a whole fleet of men-of-war, the shrouds filled, the sides hung with officers and men like bees; streamers flying, cannons saluting, the sea half shaded with shipping, and half dancing with

sunbeams; and down below, in the midst of all the vessels, a boat coming, filled with gallant sailors and beautiful women.

The rogues of young officers glowed with pleasure, as they assisted the Duchess's court up the sides. In a few minutes all were on deck under the awning, laughing, shaking hands, adjusting their hair, and making a thousand pretty remarks on their boldness.

"'Tis hardly fair," said Buckhurst; "you will take the hearts out of us, and then what shall we do with the Dutchmen?"

"Oh fie, my Lord!" cried Lady Falmouth, "as if we had left you any hearts already."

"Why that's true," said the poor lover, and turned aside. Buckhurst had formerly written something a little severe on her Ladyship (then Miss Bagot) and he now repented of it, which she guessed, though not to the extent of his penitence.

"If you behave yourselves very ill," continued the Countess, "and shew symptoms of not being able to do without it, perhaps we may restore you a little bit or so, just enough to fight with."

"A very little bit will do," said Hewit; "'tis impossible the Dutchmen can stand it, having no women."

"Alas!" said Lady Falmouth, more gravely, "we are sad wild creatures; but if my Lord and the

rest of you had not such great hearts, we should think it necessary to be merrier than we are, I assure you, in order to conceal our griefs; for we do not like it, this fighting; so you must all be very gallant and amusing; and the Duchess will not care how soon we dine, I think."

Dinner was served up with a speed, and what's more, with a splendour that surprised us. Cleopatra herself might have countenanced it. The Duke, it seems, had had notice a day or two before of his wife's intentions; though, after his fashion, he said nothing about them. Fish, flesh, and fowl, the finest apples and pears, strawberries, and May-cherries, and more fruit, natural as well as forced, than anybody could have expected another year, (for the season was very hot) abounded; to say nothing of wines and jellies, and a thousand other things, which nobody cared about. Whatever old fellows say who have lost their memories, women and wine cannot co-exist together in any proportion. Wine may help an old gentleman to admire a woman; but women make the young ones forget their wine.

Our fair visitors complained that the dinner was too good. Plain beef and sailors' fare, would have pleased them better. Some junk was accordingly set before them, to the delight of the men who saw

it, who went and told the rest; and I believe the crabbedest saint on board felt propitious towards the fair mariners. The comfits we turned into shot. The ladies having exhibited this turn for the sea, we compelled them to drink a little more wine than usual, insisting upon turning them into regular sea-women, which notion gave rise to a million of metaphors, astonished at meeting together, such as syrens and Dutchmen; Venuses, trowsers, and cosmetics; shot-silk and midshipmen; *jardinées*, beef, orange-water, and boatwsains; besides a marvellous set of people (as Falmouth styled them), called mermaids. But the glory of the entertainment consisted in those who gave rise to it. The occasion and the sea air heightened their complexions; and the colours of the awnings over head struck down a bloom over the whole scene, as rich as one of Rubens's pictures.

In the afternoon we had tea and chocolate, dances, music, and every pleasure that ship-board could devise. The Duke danced with every lady; but I believe he danced five times with Miss Churchill. Durfort led off Miss Blagg; and as the latter did not speak French, he half killed us with laughing at the broken English he was compelled to gabble. He called her "one charming fish-woman;" and complained that her eyes, instead

of being "towers on fire," (beacons) "to serve to navigator for self-know," would make them "expose themselves to the swallow-up."

Hewit was right about the favour we should all be in. In truth, it would have been wonderful if such kind hearts did not feel more than usual for a parcel of young fellows, about to risk their lives for their good opinion. I believe we all made greater way in it, in one day, than courtiers at home could in a year; and more than one attachment took place, which lasted, I believe, even longer.

Our pleasures lasted till we prepared to set sail again. The wind shifted, so as to be favourable to the Dutch for coming out, and the ladies took their departure. It was lucky the interval was so short between our enjoyment and our bustle. Falmouth himself seemed inclined to be melancholy, and Buckhurst was absolutely peevish; a very new thing with him. Just at this moment, fresh dispatches came to the Duke, and a new turn was given to our discourses by a paper among them, which contained an account of Lord Rochester's having been sent to the Tower.

"To the Tower!" cried everybody. Brunker told Hewit, just as he was leaving the vessel, and Hewit came back to astonish us.

"And what prank has Virgin-modesty begun

with," cried Portland, "to get him into the Tower?"

"Virgin-modesty," answered Sir George, "ran away the other night with Virgin Mallett, but was brought back again; so they clapt him into the Tower, for not doing it better."

I had been greatly interested by this young nobleman, Lord Rochester; more so, at first, than by Lord Buckhurst. Perhaps one reason was, that inheriting a great devotion to the King, and finding I was about his Majesty's person, he did me the honour to seek my acquaintance. He was not yet of age, a stripling in person, handsome, full of vivacity, and yet possessed of a certain softness, and intelligence of address, that looked like the very genius of good breeding; for he had scarcely been anywhere but at college. The only drawback upon it was his tendency to blush, which got him, from the King, the title of Virgin-modesty. He had a perpetual flow of spirits, as if his veins ran Burgundy. He was an excellent scholar, and talked of wit and poetry, as though he had been born a master of both (as, indeed, it turned out); nor could people help wondering, some time afterwards, that a young nobleman, capable of shining to such a degree at home, and becoming the mirror of a court (to say nothing of love and the ladies), should choose to hazard his person,

twice over, in the rudest kind of warfare, as if nothing but an excess of triumph in everything could content him; for stripling as he was, he was in the second Dutch fight under Albemarle, and afterwards in the desperate affair at Berghen. 'Twas as if he had been a kind of god Mercury, and had a patent for escaping death and the bullets.

The truth was, that inheriting from his father a great deal of loyalty, and very little money, he thought of pushing himself forward in the naval service: and above all, he had really a great deal of ambition. The battle in which we ourselves were now about to be engaged, set a great many others upon a like road to admiration, and Rochester did not choose to be behindhand. The pleasantness of his intercourse was in a great measure owing to the happiness of his blood, and the perpetual pleasure he gave and received; but under the softness of it, there lurked a pride, and an impatience of contradiction, which manifested itself in those frequent blushes, which I have spoken of, and which, to casual notice, had something in them touching, and (as the King said) almost virgin-like. In short, his Lordship wished to be the first in everything. Perhaps there was even a degree of constitutional weakness in the passion

with which he pursued this object. In spite of a natural tendency the other way, which exhibited itself too plainly afterwards, he acquired a reputation for daring courage; yet being rallied one day on his fondness for the bullets, as if not without ostentation or fool-hardiness, his colour mantled as usual, and he proceeded, with an address and vivacity hardly to have been expected from that symptom, to give such an account of his reasons for not chusing to be more tender of himself, as doubled the admiration of the company, and made them laud him to the skies. These reasons were connected with the adventure of the running away; of which adventure, as I afterwards heard the particulars from his Lordship himself, I shall here give an account; first, because it took place at the epoch of my history, and secondly, because we did little but talk about it till we put to sea again. His great enemy in the business was Lord Sandwich. Sandwich wanted the lady for Hinchinbrook. The King, who was the more willing to get money for his old friend's son, since he had none to give him, had often spoken to Miss Mallet in his behalf; but owing to the distance at which he was kept, and the number of his rivals, Rochester had never been able to converse with her in private, till the night he took her off. I suspect the King

was in the secret, and that the young Lord was sent to the Tower as a cloak. The lady had been supping at Whitehall, in the apartments of Miss Stewart, where it is pretty certain his Majesty could not have refrained from going, at least for some part of the evening. Rochester said nothing about the King; but it was clear from what he let fall, that he had reckoned on some particular influence with the lady, and that others had prepared her to listen to him. His Lordship posted himself at Charing Cross, with horsemen and footmen. The lady was to go home that way by coach with her grandfather, my Lord Hawley. The servants having been tampered with, the coach arrives, but finds a difficulty in passing another coach. In fine, a wheel gives way. Rochester comes up with his attendants, proposing to assist. The horses are made uncomfortable; the lady is frightened, and gets out, the old Lord, a jovial fellow, but gouty, constantly lifting up his voice to inform her that nothing is the matter. The old gentleman then swears at his toes, and is impeded with heaps of assistance. The young Lord meanwhile makes up for lost time; the lady listens, trembles, cries out (her grandfather always bidding her be easy,) and finally, betwixt crying and laughing, she finds herself in the coach hostile, which dashes away for Piccadilly.

“My poor grandfather,” cried Miss Mallett, weeping, “what an agony he will be in!”

“Yes, madam, of the gout; but consider how soon we shall revive him!”

“Not so soon, my Lord, as you imagine. He will see nothing before him but black and dismal images.”

“The two negro-boys, I own, madam;” (the lady laughed) “but there is your picture by Lely, till you come back; and when he sees you again, the sight will make him forgive me everything.”

“And what am I to do, sir?”

His Lordship here launched into seas of description, and accounts of duties incumbent upon young ladies who are run away with, which fairly took away her power to reply; but she listened betwixt astonishment and good-nature, till they were far on the Uxbridge road. In a word, all would have gone well, if the old Lord, on the strength of his being a horse-officer, and meeting with some of Sandwich’s people, had not sent a whole body of cavaliers after them, who came up just as he had seen her housed at Uxbridge. They met him in the street, looking about for a parson. “Such are the calamities,” said he, “which a man gets into by having a conscience!”

“And what will he do in the Tower?” said Portland.

"He will do as Monk did," answered Buckhurst: "he will philosophize, and make love to his washerwoman's daughter."

"And marry her when he comes out?"

"Nay, youth will do much; but I doubt whether Virgin-modesty will go so far as that. Rochester has young blood, but an old head; now I doubt whether his Grace of Albemarle has not always had old blood, and a pericranium juvenile."

"Your Lordship, however," said Mr Pearce, the surgeon, who liked a bit of gossip, "does not take his old blood to be cold blood; I mean, not fearful blood?"

"Oh, extremely fearful," replied Buckhurst,—
"to the enemy. Cold blood! ay, about as cold as the steel that is coming to cut one's throat; as cool, Mr Pearce, as the lancet with which you mean to twinge us. No, no, 'George,' as the Duchess calls him, is as brave as—what shall I say,—as the Duchess herself; and he is a bold man who should call her prowess in question. 'Tis more than the Duke dare venture upon. If his Grace fears anybody in the world, 'tis the dowdy his wife; and if there is anybody in the world he despises, 'tis the enemy."

"Pray, my Lord," enquired Pearce, "is it true, that her Grace is so totally unqualified by

her manners for the high rank to which she has been raised?"

"Why, I'll tell you," said his Lordship; "you have heard of Troutbeck, whom he drinks with. Well, Troutbeck once prevailed on Sir Charles Sedley to go and taste some of the Duke's claret, which he said had been sent him by the French King. Sedley, who repented next day his having agreed to go, contrived to get me invited too, in order to stand by him; so we went, and found a dirty table cloth and four lumps of meat. Bess, (for so Troutbeck calls her, though her name be Nan) was in high good humour, and would have crammed us with beef and claret together, her lord, she said, (who by the way is a little stingy) being but a plain soldier, and not understanding the ways at court. His Grace was sitting all this while at the other end of the table, eating like a giant, and saying nothing. The Duchess undertook to apologise for his silence; touching her forehead significantly, and saying; "Always in the wars; always in the wars." "That's the reason I suppose," said Troutbeck, in a low voice (for he was getting drunk) "that you have furnished him so well with *chevaux-de-frise*."

"What's that you say, Mr Troutbeck," said the fair Nan, "with your shiver and freeze? Pray,

gentlemen," (her colour rising violently, for it seems she had just had a quarrel with Troutbeck, and she suspected he had been saying something against her), "is it the custom at court for people to tell lies of one another to their faces; for I know they do it behind their backs?"

"What's the matter there?" enquired his Grace. "Oh, don't mind Troutbeck; you know he was not himself yesterday, when he offended you, and he was sorry for it."

"Sorry me no sorrys, my Lord Duke," cried the Duchess; "if Mr Troutbeck tells lies of me, I'll tell truths of him."

"That's very savage," said Troutbeck.

Sedley was impudent enough to assure her Grace, that Mr Troutbeck had told no lies of her: upon which I ventured to tell a greater; namely, that no lies were told at court, as far as I knew.

"What, not even behind one's back!" cried the Duchess.

"No, madam; nor sideways, that I am aware of," said Sir Charles.

"See there now!" cried the Duchess; "Ay, ay, the gentlemen are fairly caught; for my Lord Buckhurst is a courtier, and Sir Charles is a courtier, and if they hav'nt been telling me the greatest lies in the world, into the very eyes o' me..."

Here her Grace broke into a jovial laugh of

triumph, in which we all joined, and harmony was restored.

"I am told," said Pearce, "her Grace prefers ale to wine; and does not stick at an oath or so."

"'Tis very true," said Buckhurst; "but we must have a care, Mr Pearce; the limit is very nice between high breeding and low. I will not wager that there are many ladies at court, who prefer ale to wine; but I know some who will drink a good deal of both; and if 'd—ns' and 'by G—ds' are not counted precisely the thing, 'i'faiths' and 'deuces' are privileged; and there is a relish, with some of the high-flyers, for 'zounds.' I have known very pretty lips cry 'zounds' and 'the devil.' The King likes it; and you know their anxiety to please him."

This part of his Lordship's information did not quite please me. I had had suspicions to the same effect respecting a lady to whom I thought myself under obligations; and his Lordship seemed to confirm them.

I was going to make some remark, when conversation was interrupted by final orders for sailing. The boatswain piped all hands, and every one hurried away.

Instead of ladies and dancing, it was now to be the Dutch and hard blows.

CHAPTER XII.

THE return of the east wind, which fetched out the Dutchmen, caused us some difficulty in going to meet them, nor did we discern them till two days afterwards, when, upon coming to anchor in Southwold Bay, we saw them about one o'clock in the afternoon, to the windward of us. Still, owing to various causes, and to the endeavours of both sides to get the wind of each other, the two fleets did not come together, for nearly forty-eight hours. It was two o'clock in the morning, on the third of June, when the enemy were discovered lighting their matches; and after contriving to get the wind of them, the battle began about three. It took place off Lowestoff, and was the most memorable one of the kind that had yet been known. We had about a hundred ships on our side, the Dutch a good many more. His Highness's vessel, the Royal Charles, by some mischance or another, was

not so much engaged at first, as many of the others. Gallant Kit Minns, who so shocked the Spaniard with his brief name, and delighted Nelly with his plebeian origin, got a-head of us, and was the first to engage; and afterwards the Earl of Sandwich succeeded in breaking the enemy into two divisions; which was the ultimate cause of our victory.

How all this took place, I cannot pretend to say; nor, for aught I could learn, were more official persons much better agreed upon it. All I know is, that the weather was very fine and clear when we began, with not a cloud in the sky; that we made a number of tacks, signals, stoppages, and other phenomena, as unintelligible apparently to those who assisted in making them, as to us volunteers who looked on; that when I fancied we were close to the Dutchmen, I found, by a little turn of the vessel, that we were a good way off, as if when about to strike one another in this martial dance, we suddenly thought fit to curtsy round about; and that, finally, on a sudden, drums beat, and trumpets sounded; and we found ourselves giving and receiving thundering broadsides from a Dutchman, as was the case with most of the other ships. There was a show of something like order and design at first, and the opponents approached each other in line; but it did not hold. We pro-

ceeded to charge through one another's ranks, as well as we could, which we did several times, exchanging salutes of the most violent description; and then it should seem, we selected our individual foes, like the heroes in Virgil, and so stabbed away for it.

We had long prepared for battle. Everything was in order. The looks of the old seamen were quiet, as usual; those of the new ones more so, but a little pale. 'Twas like the hush before a tempest.

The first crash of the broadside was tremendous. There was a flash like lightning, and then the side of the vessel seemed giving way like a house. This was followed by groans, and the flying of splinters and pieces of iron. The men hurra'd.

I was stationed with Herne and some others on the quarter-deck, in the capacity of aid-de-camps to his Highness. It is lucky he had no orders for me very speedily; for the novelty, the noise, and the mystification, fairly took away my senses for a moment. I believe Montagu said something to me, which I did not very well understand. I soon however recovered; and felt nothing except a greater wish to be stirring. The seamen were at their guns; the smoke was thickening; and Herne was at my side, watching the Duke, who walked up and down before us, conversing with his

captain, Sir William Penn. The Duke then called back to him my Lords Falmouth and Muskerrey, who had been conversing with him before, and resumed the discourse. They were joined by Dick Boyle, who had been laughing to us about a notion of Hewit's, that the Dutch made cannon-balls of their cheeses. A minute had scarcely elapsed, when a little powder-monkey, running past us (a boy with flaxen locks like a doll,) cried out, in his penny-whistle voice, "D—nation!" his heels being tripped up at the same time by a plash of blood. This blood was poor Dick Boyle's. One of the cannon-balls he had been joking about, as if to make him eat his words, had swept, at a blow, himself, Lord Falmouth, and Lord Muskerrey, knocking off the head of our gallant acquaintance, and dashing the blood and brains of Lord Falmouth over the Duke's person. Sir Thomas Clifford was talking with the disguised priest.

We all ran up to his Highness to see that he was safe.

"Some vinegar and a sponge; you'll find it in the cabin, gentlemen," said Penn.

"Go, Esher," said Herne; "for something has hurt my side."

Something had hurt both of us a little. I know

not what it was, but it came from our poor friends. It was said afterwards to be Mr Boyle's head. My wound was in the left arm. I did not feel it at the time; but when I proceeded to use the muscle in getting the sponge and vinegar, it gave me an agony that turned me sick. I fetched what was wanted, and had the honour of assisting to purify the royal person. Some blood had spurted over the Duke's face. His Highness was very firm; but talked more than usual. He made us note down the hour, and other circumstances attending the accident.

Warm work continued till about two in the afternoon, when the fire of the enemy beginning to slacken, and Opdam not shouldering us, or making so much noise as he had done, the Duke gave the word to forbear firing a little; in order that the smoke being diminished, we might know what we were about.

Having thus cleared our eyesight, we found ourselves agreeably accompanied by the Royal Oak, and some other vessels, which had dropped out of the battle to refit; an addition to our strength, which so daunted the enemy, that they had begun, though in a very brave and reluctant manner, to give way. It was a pleasant sight to see friends so close to us, instead of enemies; for though I had been set in the place of an officer

who was killed, and had now some active work to look to, and so was occupied, and full of any thoughts but uneasy ones, yet the sense of hazard doubles the affectionate as well as hostile emotions ; and our hands longed to grapple as much in a friendly way with our countrymen aboard the new comers, as they did to settle the pertinacity of the Dutchmen.

The Royal Charles now recommenced firing, and the battle was again raging in other quarters, when a noise, as if the ship had burst asunder, suddenly took place. This was succeeded by a darkness and a silence like midnight. I had no conception what it was at the moment. It seemed like an earthquake at sea ; or rather (Sir Philip said) as if heaven had thrust down its foot, clothed in night and darkness, to trample us for our folly. The ship trembled, and the sails plunged like a shaken carpet. A thick smoke then fell upon us.

It was Opdam, who had blown up. A dead quiet succeeded through the whole fleet, for at least ten minutes, interrupted only by the working of the ship, and little cries of men. We seemed to hear even the silence for the space of a minute or so ; in the course of which, the man who had been working the gun next me, said in a low, but unfaltering voice, " He shall feed me in a

green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort." The voice then retreated inwardly, still muttering the psalm.

The tranquil beauty of the verse that was thus audible, accompanied by the mysterious horror of the circumstances around us, had an effect singularly corroborative of the awfulness of the moment. A little after the explosion, and when the mind had become, as it were, duly sensible of its extreme terribleness, I shook from head to foot, like a frightened horse. Older men did not hesitate to avow themselves as much affected. My friend Herne not only shook, but somebody whispering to him, to know what it was, he said his tongue cleaved to his mouth, and that he forgot the man's name who asked him.

The first thing that roused us from our astonishment, was the falling of splinters, pieces of rope, and fiery pitch and oakum, which alarming us for the safety of the vessel, put all hands in requisition. The Dutch had now quite given way, and were preparing to run for it, with the exception of the *Orange*, a fine eighty-four, commanded by one Seaton, a man of Scottish parentage; who being a stout fellow, and of a family celebrated for their high spirit, must needs resolve to run his vessel on board us, and so have the honor of taking, or being taken, by the Duke. We discerned him, like the

image of a gallant seaman, against the red and dark-rolling smoke, mounted aloft on the stern, and brandishing a two-handed broadsword. Seeing him advance thus boldly and alone, some cried out it was a fire-ship; but the Duke bade them be quiet, for they would see their mistake presently by the broadside he was preparing to give us. The honour, however, of being thus set to rights was interrupted, like that of our leading the van, by a vessel a-head of us; which running between, and getting yard-arm and yard-arm with the valiant Scot, received the intended broadside, giving him one in return, though not without a loss of sixty men. Seaton had soon to do with more than one enemy, and so was compelled to strike; and in three days after, "he died, sir:" (as I heard the Duke say to Mr Evelyn) "died, sir, of his wounds and bruises, the consequence of his rash ambition."

This vessel was fired, and the men taken out. The same destruction overtook five or six other vessels in a more terrible manner, by means of our fire-ships. Their crews plunged out of them into the waters, fairly covering the sea round about us. At this sad spectacle, with the inconsistency so remarkable in human nature, and at which in our reflecting moments we know not whether to admire or be angry, everybody was putting forth to help the enemies they had just

ruined, hazarding their own lives with receiving and dragging them up into their boats, some of which threatened to swamp at every dip. My friend, Sir Philip, making nothing of his wound (indeed it was not much) had eagerly asked the Duke to let him go upon this service. His Highness, who had a great regard for him, affectionately bade him not be too eager; adding, as he saw he wished it, that I might go and assist him; and desiring me to control his ardour. But we forgot everything when we saw the drenched and earnest wretches, crowding about us, weltering and beating against the boat. The great basin of the sea, in which we suddenly found ourselves let down, the huge hulks of the vessels around us, the cries of the boats' crews and their officers, the sulphureous atmosphere rolling around and narrowing the horizon, and the very colours of the officers' heavy coats, with their reds and blues, make up sometimes a picture in my imagination, as if I remembered observing it all at the moment. The men whom we had just been regarding as enemies, seemed now to consist of none but sons and brothers, for whose fate we were as anxious as if their kindred was our own. 'Twas an affecting sight to see rugged old man kissing our hands, because the nearness of death had made them think of their children; and beardless boys lord-

ing it over older but duller seamen, in the vivacity of their rank. "My God!" exclaimed Herne, looking at a boat close to us, and turning as pale as he had latterly been red, "it must be done!—See, Mr Walters!"—addressing a master's mate, who was with us. Walters turned about, and taking a marling-spike in his hand, stretched over to the boat, and dashed it on the knuckles of a man who was struggling to get in. The poor wretch gave up the struggle, and retreated into his watery grave; but the boat was saved. Sir Philip turned aside, and tried to conceal his tears. "God bless you, sir," said Walters; "you have been the salvation of a matter of thirty men." My friend said nothing. We were now pulling back to the ship; and he sat with his hat over his eyes, looking on the water. But the same evening he got permission of the Duke to have Mr Walters presented to him, and his Highness promised to bear him in mind, which he did.

We chased the Dutch all the evening, and took more vessels: nor could the main body of their fleet have escaped us, but for a circumstance that made a great noise. The Duke had ordered the Norwich to keep just a-head of us with lights, so as to give notice in case the enemy altered their course; and next morning we were to set upon them again. His Highness then retired to rest,

still keeping his clothes on, to be in readiness; nor could he satisfy himself before he lay down, without coming upon deck once more, to see that all was right.

He had not been in his cabin above a quarter of an hour, when Brunker, a groom of his bed-chamber (brother of Lord Brunker the mathematician*) came up to the master, Captain Cox, with directions to slacken sail. The vessel, he said, being so good a sailer, might run in among the enemy during the night, and so be clapt on board by some fire-ship, or find herself next day surrounded and cut off. I was present, and heard all that passed, and so did half a dozen of us. We had been admiring the beauty of the night, and the quiet scudding of the vessel, after all the jolting and uproar; and Cox, stooping sideways from the helm which he had taken in hand, and peering straight before him over the water, had just been saying in his dry manner, "We shall have 'em, every mother's son!"

Brunker gave his direction in a hasty and decisive but polite manner, and then stood in the act of

* He had himself a turn for science, and was a great chess-player. The libellers and gossips of the day represent him as occupying the chief post in no very honorable intendency under the gallant Duke, the same that Bab May and Chaffinch had under the King his brother.—*Edit.*

preparing to return: waiting the Captain's answer as a matter of course.

Cox begged him to repeat what he had said.

Brunker did so; adding, that the matter was a very nice matter, no less a person than the heir of the crown being concerned in it; which made it imperative on the Captain to run no risks.

"I am bound to run just as much risk, sir, and just as little, as I am ordered," said the Master: "the Duke bade me hold right on; and 'tis my duty to do so. Does the Duke send me a countermand? You say you have directions, Mr — a — pray favour me with his Highness's words. Does he *order* me to slacken sail?"

Brunker replied, that the Duke had not given him a direct order. His Highness had said, that he thought it would be better to do so; upon which he (Brunker) regarded himself as desired to give directions accordingly; and that he had left the cabin, expressly for that purpose, the Duke not ordering him to remain.

He concluded with repeating, that "the matter was a very delicate matter, and that gentlemen about a prince in so great a station, next heir to the crown, and the hope of the people, were not expected to wait for every nicety of direction, when orders were to be understood."

"Orders," returned Cox, "are everything;

out, under favour, they must be understood to a tittle; and furthermore, they must be brought by the right officer. The matter, as you say, Mr — a — a — what is the gentleman's name?"

"Brunker."

"The matter, as you say, is a very nice matter, Mr Bunker; but I am only the master, you see; and as you are only a—a—person on board,—I beg pardon,—what is the gentleman's rank, if I may be so bold?"

"'Tis Mr Brunker, Groom of his Highness's bed-chamber."

Cox resuming with a dip of his head, which was to be understood as a bow: "As you are one of his Highness's grooms, Mr Blunker, and not an officer of the vessel, I can only say, that his Highness gave me positive orders to keep within gun-shot of the enemy, and that I must continue to do so, unless one of my superior officers brings me a countermand."

So saying, he gave a push to the tiller; and jerking some tobacco from his mouth a yard off, seemed to dismiss both that and the subject together.

Brunker however was not to give up the point so easily. He recommenced, by complimenting the master on his zeal; but observed, that peculiar circumstances made a difference in what would

be the properest thing in the world under any others. And then he set forth the danger of needlessly hazarding the life of his Majesty's brother; which he said might be taken ill by the King himself; adding, that the Duke, and indeed all his officers and men, had conducted themselves already like heroes, and won a glorious victory; and that he could not see the policy of doing more than was necessary, when everything had been done so well.

"Policy!" exclaimed the master in a heat:—"what the devil have I to do with policy? Damn it, sir, you seem to me—I beg pardon—but you're in my way, Mr Blunder;—you should never get in the way of the helmsman, sir:—and so, sir, I can't do it, by G—d; and that's the long and the short of it."

"Then I am to tell the Duke so?"

"Damn it, sir, what signifies talking? The Duke's too good a seaman to expect me to act unseaman-like. He gave me orders not a quarter of an hour ago, to keep right up to the Dutchmen;—he came back again, as the gentlemen here can testify, to say so again; and unless his Highness's lieutenant brings me counter-orders, or somebody else who knows something about the matter, and has a right to speak, d—m me, if Bill Cox shorten sail a thread."

The Groom of the Bedchamber, much disconcerted, went off to Sir John Harman, his Highness's Lieutenant. Most of us followed him.

"Sir John," said he, "will you be good enough to give your directions to Captain Cox to shorten sail? The Duke wishes it, but I cannot beat it into the Master's head that he can act without the orders of a superior officer. I hope indeed I am not in the wrong on that point. If so, Captain Harman will set me right, and the Master too."

Sir John, who was in the act of taking some supper off his knee, nearly tilted over his beef in looking about him. His lifted eyebrows asked us for information. We told him that Mr Brunker had been to Captain Cox with wishes from the Duke that he should shorten sail, and that the Captain said he could not do it without regular orders.

"Certainly not," said Harman; "'tis impossible, Mr Brunker. Shorten sail! God bless your soul, d'ye see the way we're in? Right and tight, and not a man to escape us? Why, it's all as plain and straightforward, as a punch in a Dutchman's guts."

"Nay," said Brunker, ready to make way by a jest, "you should say rather a *kick* at a burgo-master, for he is running before you."

"Mayhap it might be said so," replied Har-

man, "if the Dutch shewed his hind-quarters for nothing; but that's not the way with a brave man, Mr Brunker; and so we talk, like gentlemen, of punching him in the guts."

"Like a proper belli-gerent," quoth Montagu.

"Right," said Brunker, and he laughed again; but the Groom did not seem to be quite easy.

"All that," continued he, "is very true; yet it is no less true that the Duke wishes to let the poor devils take breath awhile. He sees no use in being in such a damned hurry."

"Oh, ho!" quoth Sir John, "we are thereabouts, are we! But are you sure the Duke's wishes are what you say?"

The Groom shrugged his shoulders, as much as to reply, that he hoped he was not capable of stating what was untrue.

"I beg your pardon, Mr Brunker," resumed Harman, "but are you sure his Highness was quite awake? People mutter strange things sometimes, when they are going to sleep."

Brunker took advantage of this remark as quick as lightning. He said he could not answer for that. Sir John had thrown a new light on the business: but he would go down and make certain.

He went accordingly, and a pause took place, nobody chusing to speak before the Captain, and he not knowing what to say. At length he mut-

tered aloud, "D—n his pimping face, what would he be at? Here we are, gentlemen, wind and tide in our favour, and the Dutchmen in our very hands, and this silk-petticoat son of a bitch——eh? —it looks very like it; but we have nabbed him, I think. Let him bring me the Duke's message, if he can."

Alas! poor Sir John had nabbed himself. Up comes Mr Brunker a second time with the very message, or what he states to be such. The Duke, he said, was as wide awake as himself, and now sent positive orders to shorten sail, and to Captain Harman.

"Positive?" said Harman.

"Positive, Sir John," and then laying his hand upon his heart, "upon my honour."

Sir John evidently felt, that he had hampered himself by the question he put at first. He muttered, shifted his posture a little, and half laughed, as men do when about to acquiesce in a foolish thing. Finally, he said, "Well, if I must, I must;" and then not only shortened sail, but for a while brought the ship to. He evidently did this, in hopes that the Duke might send up to enquire why he had exceeded orders, which would have given him an opportunity of ascertaining whether Brunker had not exceeded them. No notice, however, was taken. The stoppage

threatened, ere long, to disorder the fleet; so he put before the wind again, though not quickly enough to regain the time. At day-break the top-sails were hoisted just as the Duke had left them; so that although the Dutch were far a-head of us, we were still a good way in advance of our own fleet; which was afterwards given as a reason for a circumstance that struck us all when his Highness came upon deck. This was, that he expressed no surprise at his being thus outsailed, nor indeed uttered one syllable on the matter from beginning to end.

We knew not what to make of it. Every moment after his Highness had made his appearance, we expected him to say something. Harman wished to find his orders confirmed, but did not dare to hazard the discovery of their non-existence. Cox looked dry. Brunker kept close to his master. How the matter escaped discussion, I cannot imagine. But the Duke did not stay on deck long; and Brunker followed him.

The upshot was, that the main body of the enemy not only escaped, but were enabled to pretend that they got the victory. Very different stories are told on such occasions by the two parties. But no Englishman doubted that he had won a victory, and a great one. Very good reasons we had to shew for it; as good for the putting to flight,

as they were little and marvellous for the non-pursuit. Neither did anybody, as far as I could see, doubt the courage of the Duke. To be sure; Montagu, and one or two more, ventured to think that he might have been struck with the fate of Lord Falmouth and the others, and so have been the more willing to put up with Brunker's proceeding. But we were all so much puzzled, we knew not what to conclude; and in a short time we said almost as little about the matter as his Highness.

This business was destined to be mysterious, to the last. The examination of it did not take place in the House of Commons, till nearly three years afterwards. The Duke's friends affirmed, that he had discovered nothing about it till the autumn following the battle. * Sir John Harman contradicted himself during the inquiry, and was committed to custody by Parliament; but alleged that his memory had been hurt by illness in the service; and, finally, he stood to the account as above stated.

* Clarendon says, not for the long period before mentioned; but the present is the date assigned by James himself, in the *Life* published not long ago, and collected out of "Memoirs writ by his own hand." Vol. 1. 4to. 1816, p. 422. What is the reason of this extraordinary difference between the Chancellor's statement, and his royal son-in-law's? Is it a fresh instance of the great historian's manœuvring? or another specimen of the reserve for which James II. was famous?—*Edit.*

Lastly, Bruncker was both turned out of Parliament and dismissed the Duke's service, in the spring of the year sixty-eight; upon which he fled over seas, but returned in autumn, and was suffered to make his appearance at Whitehall. He was afterwards a commissioner of trade and plantations, and conferrer to his Majesty; and he lately succeeded his brother the Viscount. It was a joke, when he was playing chess, to call his pawns cabin-boys, and the King his antagonist a Dutchman.*

Pleasant was it, on arriving at the Nore, to talk over our dangers again with our friends in the other vessel. One had miraculously escaped this and that peril; another had more luckily obtained a convenient wound, just enough for a sling; which was my case. Herne lamented, that in a day or two he should have no pretensions, even to a limp. Our losses were much deplored; but as none of us but our commander missed any particular friend, we looked more grieved than we felt. Our own safety, and the prospect of a brilliant welcome at home, made us too happy. The truest regret felt by any of us was for poor Dick Smith! You remember Dick Smith, Nelly's link-boy! Yes, even so: he died of a shot right

* We suppose, because the King at chess cannot be taken.—*Edit.*

through him in this battle; and he died, as he had lived, with a heart fit for an admiral, which I would not swear he did not reckon upon becoming. He had tried hard to go with Sir Christopher Minns; and that prospect failing, was about to enter another vessel, when Sir Christopher himself, seeing his eagerness, spoke to Sir William Penn, who dismissed a bad servant and put him in his place. Bill Penn, as well as Kit Minns—"Bless," cried Hewit, "their little dirks of names!"—had risen from the humblest stations; and Dick Smith felt as happy, and as luckily named, as they.

Poor fellow! I never think of the acquaintance I made with him, but a real shadow falls on my mind, for all I write about him so lightly. The first time I saw him, was in the Duke's cabin. His Highness had got a large party to dinner, and Sir William's servant was stationed behind his master. The Duke, though so cold and proud in his address to strangers, could be pleasant enough at the head of his table, especially when the wine was flowing, and he had the reputation of some flourishing amour. The talk fell as usual upon love; but as Sir William, and one or two other strict persons were present, was more restrained than ordinary; which, to say the truth, did not make it less agreeable. It then turned upon little Nelly, and the conquests she was likely to make. I

related, as delicately as I could, and with a good deal of reserve as to myself, the first adventures of the new actress, not omitting the story of the gallant link-boy. Dick met with much eulogy. Buckhurst swore he was worthy of a ballad, and hoped he would give rise to many.

At this point of the discourse, cries Sir William to his servant, "What are you about, Smith? Have you been to sea these three years, and not yet learned to set a bottle of wine on the table steadily?" The name of Smith which had just been in our mouths, made us turn and look at the lad. 'Twas the lover himself. I recognised him by his likeness to the King; a very handsome one, but still enough to strike. This likeness, I had mentioned, and so there the poor fellow stood confest. Whether his paleness was owing to the new fortunes of his mistress and the victories we had spoken of; or, as was more likely, to a mixed feeling of anguish at that prospect, with a sudden bewildering joy at perceiving that she had liked him better than he fancied, it is impossible to say; but he could not stand the conflict. "I beg pardon, sir," said he: "I am not very well, I fancy—a little giddy—sir; I hope his noble Highness will not be angry, but I believe I had better go away, for I am not fit to stand." "Go, go, my lad," said the Prince.

He came to me afterwards, a few hours before the fight, begging a thousand pardons, but with a manly humility. He said, that he was sure I should not be above taking charge of a letter for him, in case he and a comrade of his were killed. I told him, that it should go in the same box with that of a very noble gentleman, a friend of mine; and that if it were my lot to survive the gallant letter-writers, who I hoped would be as alive and merry as myself, I would carry their packets to the Land's End, if they pleased. He retreated, full of gratitude; and by four o'clock in the evening was a corpse.

About his heart was found tied a piece of the skirt of an old linen jacket, in which was a paper containing these words, well spelt, and in good hand-writing:—"This piece of cloth wiped away the tears, which were kindly shed, (January 10th, 1658) when I did her a little service, by the adorable Miss Gwynn."

"That's true love," said Herne. "Poor fellow!" added he:—"we call people poor when they die, but they die sometimes very rich, though they have not a stiver. Nelly will weep for him. He was happy surely, for he loved well, and he thought his mistress worthy. I like her still better than before; though perhaps it was as well he should go off in this exaltation."

The death appeared to be instantaneous. We

talked much of it, and the tears came into Buckhurst's eyes. As to the packet, we shall see, by and bye, how that was received. "A truce, gentlemen, to melancholy stories," said Montagu, as we rode up the Thames, in the Duke's shallop; "they make his Highness think of Lord Fal-mouth." So we changed the conversation, and returned to those of the gay survivors. Hewit, who was with us, performed his part to admiration, and was a greater coxcomb than ever. It was supposed that he would lessen his pretensions that way, having increased them in a more solid manner; but habit and success together were too much for him; so he continued as pleasant as before; only the right he assumed of bantering his followers, appeared now to have somewhat of graver warrant. He must have gone many a campaign, before fopperies like his could have consented to become threadbare.* But the finest

* Our author is a little severe on Sir George, considering the tendencies of which he is not unconscious in himself, and which indeed he sometimes makes pretty evident. Etherege is said to have unconsciously drawn his own character in that of the celebrated fop in his comedy (the Lord Foppington of the more modern play); yet he thought he was painting it after this very Hewit; Dorimant, the fine gentleman, being intended for himself. But wits are hardly bound to be patterns of that self-knowledge, which is reckoned *so difficult for sages.*—*Edit.*

new feather in the cap of our wits, was that obtained by Lord Buckhurst, in the achievement of his famous song written the night before the engagement.

At the beginning of the war, a song attributed to Sir John Mennis, had been addressed, in the name of the seamen, to the sweethearts they left behind. It made a great noise, and set his Lordship upon writing the present one. The natural air of it was thought the more of, inasmuch as it was addressed to the court ladies. A dozen hands set it to music, and for a week or two after our return we heard nothing but—

“ To all you ladies now at land
We men at sea indite,
But first wou’d have you understand
How hard it is to write :
The Muses now and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you,
With a fal, lal, de ral, de ra.”

The next three verses were much admired :

“ For though the Muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain ;
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind,
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea.

"Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind ;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost,
By Dutchmen, or by wind :
Our tears we'll send a speedier way ;
The tide shall bring them twice a day.

"The King, with wonder and surprise,
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise,
Than e'er they used of old :
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs."

The following was a still greater favorite :

"Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree :
For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind ?"

In short the whole song was a great favorite, and has ever since remained so. I believe a young officer would almost as soon blush at not knowing it, as having no mistress to drink to.

The invidious pretended that his Lordship had not written the whole of it that night ; he had only completed and put it in shape. He said, no ; he had really written it ; adding, in his pleasant manner, " By this hand, I did it."

“ Ay, like a writing-master,” said old Robarts.

Buckhurst laughed, “ To say the truth,” said he, “ I had got some of the thoughts before ; but I put them all into rhyme that evening.”

“ My Lord,” observed Lauderdale, with one of his sneers, “ ye canna escape our admiration so ; for of a troth, at sic a moment, to recollect e’en how to mak rhymes, must needs argue a vara sedate presence o’ mind, and a grit superiority to things about ye.”

“ Oh, my Lord,” replied Buckhurst, “ there is no knowing how valiant a man may be, with a bottle or two of wine in his head ; to say nothing of health, and good humour, and the wish to please ; of all which” (bowing to the crabbed minister) “ your Lordship may judge by experience.”

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